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DOMESTIC WORSHIP.

BY

William Henry

W. H. FURNESS,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITARIAN CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA.

Second Edition.

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INTRODUCTION.

To pray is one thing; to express prayer, another. We are commanded to do both. And the command is written in our nature.

To pray is to want: the consciousness of a want is, substantially, a prayer. It is the imperfect, looking out of itself, seeking what it has not, the blind yearning of a dependent and finite nature toward the Supreme. Vain then is it to say, 'I cannot pray.' For all men are praying continually, although not for the same things, nor to the same God. Whether the thing desired be lawful or unlawful, good or evil, still the desire is a prayer. From the very first, the heart is in the attitude of supplication. Even when we distinctly recognise no object of prayer, we pray. We are conscious of various cravings springing within us, seeking something out of ourselves. These are prayers.

The question, then, is not between praying and not praying. But, Shall I pray to the One Almighty and Only Living, for those things which alone are supremely desirable, or shall I pray for that which is falsely esteemed a good, looking for my wants to

be supplied, my prayers to be answered, I know not by whom? They, whose desires are selfish, who seek only sensual indulgences, are idolaters, and of the lowest description. They bow day and night at the unclean altars of false gods, however pure their outward forms and professions may be. While he who thirsts for truth and personal virtue is, spiritually regarded, praying to the Supreme Spirit. In the eye of truth, he is prostrate in supplication before the everlasting throne. No matter what may be his forms of worship, or by what name he invokes the Invisible, or even whether he have any distinct apprehensions of the Being to whom his aspirations ascend, still he prays. Prayer thus defined, even the cavils of Atheism cannot reach.

Do you ask now concerning the nature of prayer? Look into your own heart. You are conscious of wants, many and urgent. Then, question as you may, you are praying. You have within you the substance which prayer is made of. And take care, while you secretly or openly despise those who confess the obligation of prayer, that you yourself be not the true object of pity. Do you witness a good deed? And does it create within you a sense of the beauty of holiness? Does it awaken your moral wants, 'the sacred hunger' of your soul after righteousness? Then may you know what it is to pray, in the highest sense of the word. The splendours

of creation, the generous acts and heroic sacrifices of men, whatever touches the heart and awakens a desire to possess the worth that we see, all these are voices from God, summoning us to prayer, and we cannot disobey, let our understandings be never so bewildered.

But they who deny the propriety of prayer, do not content themselves with a bare denial. They urge reasons. 'God,' say they, 'is all-wise and all-powerful and all good, and He will deal with us according to his perfection. To pray to him is to imply that he needs information or importunity, and is therefore a reflection upon his knowledge and goodness. It is inconsistent with worthy apprehensions of his nature.'

Such is the argument which has been brought thousands of times against prayer. It lies with equal force against all human agency, against the common culture of the earth. But were the husbandman to withhold his hand from the plough, saying, 'The Almighty is infinitely wise and good. If it be his pleasure, I shall be fed. I shall live, whether I labour or not. And if it is not his pleasure, my labour is vain,' then, to be consistent and carry out the argument to its full extent, he should cease to want, cease to desire food and life. If this reasoning were good against labouring for food, it would be equally so against desiring it. But by no weight of argument can we annihilate the desire

of subsistence. We may refuse to employ the means of its gratification. Still the want exists, and only becomes the more urgent for being denied, until we are made to know that it is the authentic dictate of nature, and that God has formed us after this fashion, namely, to desire food and love life, so that these inherent wants, by the activity to which they prompt, may be instrumental to their own supply. It is His will to sustain us in this way and in no other. And to suppose that He will uphold us in being in any other than the natural and appointed way, is not only an idle supposition, but an absurdity. For it implies, that because he is perfect in wisdom he may do what is unwise, forsake the methods which his own unerring wisdom has devised.

So stands it with Prayer. As 'the soul's sincere desire,' it is the means established in our very nature, whereby we obtain good. In order to have, we must first desire. This is the law of our being. And when the Scripture saith, 'Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you,' it only expresses what was already written in the everlasting truth of things. The consideration, therefore, of God's perfections, so far from furnishing any argument against prayer, discloses the foundation laid for it in our nature. As God lives and fills all things, those desires that stir within you, those wants of which you are con-

scious, are not chance-impulses. They are awakened not blindly and without purpose, but in divine wisdom and for divine ends. Give heed to them, therefore, and cherish and express them with undoubting confidence, for it is God who worketh within you, and his will, thus expressed in your nature, cannot be defeated.

This general view of the nature of prayer requires to be qualified. It does not follow, because our wants are natural, implanted by the Creator, and are therefore prayers, that they are all to be always cherished and gratified. It is true, all our natural wants are right and innocent in themselves, but some of them are liable to dangerous excesses, and, although never to be extinguished, are occasionally to be denied and habitually regulated; because they are inferior to other and higher wants. Of this character are our physical *appetites*. (Mark the word, by the way. Its very derivation—*peto*, to seek—accords with our statements.) If we are capable of discerning the divine wisdom in our constitution, if we hear the divine voice within us, we know that all our wants are not equally enduring and important. Our nature demands the subordination of the appetites to higher principles. As we want food or pleasure, as truly, but infinitely more, do we want Truth and Right, and a resemblance of the whole character to that idea of perfection,

revealed to us in God. The great end of life is to establish a dominion within, 'to be strengthened with might in the inner man.' This we know, if we know aught of our religious relations; and this knowledge will supply all the needed qualifications of the general doctrine of prayer now laid down.

The reader will remark that I have thus far confined myself to prayer, considered purely as an inward service, an act of the mind. There is another and quite a distinct subject of consideration, *the expression of prayer in words* and otherwise. Every emotion, just as naturally as it rises within us, seeks expression. Its nature is to manifest itself outwardly in various ways, by the eyes, the countenance, the lips and the life. And moreover it acquires in this way a force which it would otherwise lack. These two simple facts reveal the use and need of praying in words.

Observe the working of nature. We desire bread; and, as I have said, the desire is virtually a prayer. It moves to activity. It stimulates the mind, and sets us upon devising the ways and means of its gratification. Thus it leads to the cultivation of the earth, and to all those labours and offices which result in the acquisition of food. So the appetite is gratified, and the original prayer of our nature is answered.

With the mode in which our natural wants are supplied, namely, by our own agency, we are familiar, and it awakens no surprise. And yet, in strict truth, it is as mysterious, as significant of superhuman power, as if a visible hand were extended from the heavens to give us food, every time the appetite of hunger is awakened. Nay, were the whole earth and air thronged with celestial beings, going to and fro, ascending and descending in the ceaseless work of providing sustenance for man, we should not have a more impressive token of the providence of God than is afforded in the actually existing arrangement, whereby our natural appetites, the prayers of our physical being, are heard and answered. What a pity it is that we should be so blindfolded by custom, and fail to discern the agency of heaven, because it is always busy around and within us! God is here, hearing prayer and answering it in his own wise methods, and although we have eyes, we do not see Him.

Here it will be asked, 'If the natural mode of expressing our desire of food is by the hands, set diligently at work to procure food, why should we use our lips? Why repeat that petition of the Lord's prayer, Give us this day our daily bread? If we labour for our food truly and faithfully, will the asking for it in words make any difference? Shall we be more likely to receive for the asking

than if we did not ask?' I answer, Yes, unquestionably yes. And in this way. It is the office of language, words, not only to communicate to others our thoughts and emotions, but to give them a habitation and a name in our own consciousness, increased power in our own hearts. Every one knows that a sentiment is deepened by being expressed in words. We give utterance, therefore, of our desire of food in a form of words, which implies an acknowledgement of the one only Giver of life, not to communicate information to Him, but because nature prompts such an utterance, and the act tends to render the natural feeling which it expresses more pure and true. It sanctifies the natural appetite, and associates it with the Being who implanted it, and with the purpose for which it is implanted. I do not say that the mere utterance of the words of prayer will of itself and alone create the spirit of prayer, but simply that it has a tendency to this effect, and harmonizes with the other and indispensable means whereby the spirit of devotion is fostered. The habit of making mention of our natural wants in prayer helps to hallow and chasten those wants. And if so, then are we more likely to receive what we ask, because we are more likely to labour for it more wisely and every way more faithfully. We put ourselves more completely in the position of true recipients, and the

spirit within is adjusted more perfectly to the truth of things, and acts in truer consonance with the laws and the will of God. He prays superstitiously and ignorantly, whether for temporal good or spiritual, who dreams that his prayers are to supersede the necessity of his own exertions, when their sole use is to animate and sanctify his personal efforts. When we truly pray for our daily bread, no diminution of our faith in the necessity of our own labour as a means of subsistence is implied. On the contrary, the prayer is a virtual avowal (and this constitutes all its value) of our faith in the worth of our exertions, and tends directly to increase this faith, and make it more active, and of course to make the possession of the desired good more certain. In a word, the prayer inspires us to labour aright, because it reminds us of the grounds of our labour and of Him by whom our labour is ordained and blessed. Is my own life or the life of a friend in peril? I desire deliverance. I express the desire in devout supplication, and invoke the Divine aid. By so doing, I am not led to relax, but to redouble my own exertions, with a wiser aim and more entire self-possession. Means of escape from the impending danger are revealed to me in the more elevated state of my mind, which would otherwise have been concealed; and the divine power is put forth in my behalf, not the less divine

because it is manifested through my own agency, nor the less gratefully to be acknowledged.

If these remarks are just in relation to the expression of prayer for temporal blessings, much more manifest is the advantage of giving utterance to our desires for spiritual good. By expressing these in the sacred language of devotion, we deepen them, and the more earnestly we hunger after righteousness, the more direct and steady will be our moral progress, the more abundant the strength we shall receive from God. The words of prayer are the symbols of religion, artificial, human symbols it is true, akin in their influence to the pictures which cover the walls of so many churches, and like these liable to be abused and to be mistaken for the spiritual things that they signify. But not so liable. Of all mere human symbols they are the purest and the most elevating. They help to animate the devotion which they express. And I doubt not that many a spirit which has commenced the office of prayer in a languid frame has gathered fervour as it advanced from the kindling associations of the language which it has used. Our social forms of devotion usually begin with what may be termed a meditation upon the Divine perfections. And fitly so. By bringing up before the mind thoughts of the infinite purity and majesty of God, we awake the spiritual cravings of the soul, fill it with adora-

tion, and humble it under a sense of its unworthiness. Among all the aids to devotion the Psalms of David are pre-eminent. Multitudes have there found a voice for their inner nature; and the sacred phraseology of the Bible has in all times tended powerfully to feed the spirit of religion in the hearts of men.

The outward act of devotion, praying with the lips, is in danger of being abused, and has been and is abused to the hurt of the soul. It is liable to become a mere formality, the husk and shell of religion. It is essential to true prayer that the heart be concerned in it. But then, if what is done regularly is apt to be done mechanically, it is also true that what is not done regularly is very likely not to be done at all. All acceptable prayer is spontaneous. Still it is unquestionable that by putting ourselves under a law, by binding ourselves to observe certain times and services, we may enjoy seasons of spiritual elevation with which we should not otherwise be visited. Well would it be for us if, on the threshold of every day, we could pause for a moment and consider, ere we rushed into the thick of this world's occupations. The sun rises every morning alike.

> 'It never rests nor goes astray,
> But our immortal spirits may.'

And the simple thought of our weakness and exposure would suffice, one would think, to fill us with

the spirit of prayer. A thoughtful habit of mind is indispensable to the right discharge of the offices of devotion; and where such a habit is formed, it is hardly possible that we shall not be fitted to pray with the heart as well as with the lips, at any seasons that we may appoint. The domestic circle offers the most favourable spot for the altar of social worship. And they who acknowledge their parental obligations, and know, as they must, the numerous and fearful perils which beset the path of their children, can hardly fail to perceive what strong inducements they have to the observance of stated acts of family devotion. It is true, Christianity does not enjoin domestic worship. It has instituted no special forms of religious service, but not because it would discountenance them, but because they may safely be left to that 'elder revelation' which is written in the heart, which has dictated social religious services in all times and countries, and with which our Saviour himself complied. Families are natural associations, churches instituted by nature. And here especially should the incense of social worship arise. To all social services regularity is necessary.

I am aware that some will say, 'What need is there of these stated forms? There are the daily duties of life, the work which every man finds to do all around him, in his family and in his ordinary

relations. When a religious spirit stirs within him, let it send him, not to kneel at altars, but into the haunts of misery. In the relief of the wretched it will find an ample sphere. Let acts of duty and love be our religious ceremonies.' All this has a reasonable sound. Beyond all controversy, this is the best way to manifest the religious principle, in living soberly, righteously and godly. Show us the men who thus worship, and although they worship in no other way, we will accord them our hearty reverence, and do homage to the spirit of religion which they breathe. To him whose whole life is a religious service we will render the highest honour. But why should we refuse the aid which prayer affords? It will help us to reach this exalted condition. Jesus Christ, filled as he was with the holy spirit, used this assistance, and was wont to pray with his disciples. Possibly, in some higher state of being, we may be wrapt into that constant communion with God which transcends the imperfect offices of prayer and praise. But not here. Not yet may we safely dispense with the means of spiritual elevation which the outward forms and institutions of religion provide. They who are indisposed to their use will do well to consider whether the indisposition do not arise rather from the lowness of their spiritual state than from its exaltation. The soul may fancy itself expatiating in the upper

sphere, when it is sunk in the darkest depths, and its chains may be the heaviest when it boasts most loudly.

The present volume has been prepared in compliance with repeated requests, and under the conviction that it will meet the wants of many, and foster in the hearts of others the spirit of prayer which it aims to express. To those who are disposed to ask with the disciples of Jesus, 'Teach us how to pray,' I hope this book may render some assistance, and that its influence may be to encourage them in the use of forms of their own.

The prayers are divided into sections, and are not specially appropriated to the several days of the week; that opportunity may be given for selection, omission and variety.

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MORNING.

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MORNING PRAYER.

I.

When we awake, we are still with thee, Lord God most merciful, and thy hand is over us for good, and thine eye fixed upon us evermore! No other friend, no other being is nigh unto us as Thou art. Infinite is thy power, and boundless thy will, to do us good. No tongue can tell, no thought can fathom, the depths of thy love. A mother may forget her infant child, yet never, O Lord, wilt thou forget us. We lie down, and it is under the shadow of thy wings. We rise up, and thy hand leads us, and thy right hand upholds us. In Thee we live and move and have our being.

Thy mercies are more in number than the stars of heaven, or the sand upon the sea shore. Create in us, we beseech thee, a lively sense of our infinite obligations. Inspire us with the thoughts which become thy

children. Let not our hearts, wherein thou dost especially delight to dwell, let them not be the only places where Thou art not: but be thou fervently acknowledged there, and worshipped without ceasing. We would not be forgetful of our Benefactor and our God. We have been forgetful in times past, and have rejoiced in thy bounties without a thought of the Giver. We confess it, O our Father, with shame. We see how base it is to seize thy gifts, and to depend, as we do every moment, upon thy mercy, and yet cherish no thankfulness. Still we would love Thee. Insensible as we have been, still our desire is unto Thee. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and no longer forget his benefits!

But, Heavenly Father, we would be possessed of a living sense of our obligations, not only because it is the dictate of our hearts to be grateful; we need the great thought of God as a fountain of guidance and salvation. We need thy love, shed abroad within us, to save our souls. Thou art giving us another day, and we know not what it may bring forth. We know not what perils await us, what temptations may assail us this day, what evil passions menace our peace, polluting our hearts, involving us in the guilt and wretch-

edness of sin; and we need light and strength from on high. Without the heavenly armour of religious faith we may make shipwreck of our dearest interests. Give us then, we pray Thee, give us a sacred sense of Duty, to shield us in the conflict, to guard us from sin and death. Lead us not into temptation; or, when we are tempted, deliver us from the power of evil, and make us circumspect and vigilant: and may every hour bear witness that our hearts are right with Thee, that the fear of God is upon us, and that we remember the prayers which we now utter before the throne of thy grace.

Giver of every blessing! Thou hast shown us what is good; and how divinely is it set before us in the life of thy beloved Son! May the same mind be in us that was in him, the same gentleness towards others, the same forgetfulness of self. Thou hast bound us to one another by strong ties, and given us affections which make offices of love delightful. Let no root of bitterness spring up this day between us and any of our brethren. If occasions of unkindness arise, let not this day's sun go down upon our wrath. Give us grace to subdue every angry passion, to quench the unholy flame, to stop the hasty word. May

we overcome evil with good, and, in our humble sphere, imitate that perfect benevolence which bestows upon all, upon the good and the wicked, the just and the unjust, the blessings of a common Providence. So shall we cause our light to shine, and all around us shall rejoice therein, and, being sanctified thereby, give glory unto God.

In all our duties to others, to ourselves and to Thee, may we live this day as if it were our last, and as it becomes those to live who know not what a day may bring forth. Like the sun, which never pauses and never goes astray, may our immortal souls run their race of glory, emblems and images of thy spirit, dispensing light and life, and shining, like the stars, for ever and ever!

And now, O God, that the language of prayer ceases from our lips, may the spirit of prayer abide within us and never cease. Let us not think that we quit thy presence as we turn from this domestic altar. But, by every duty faithfully discharged, by acts of self restraint and kindness, by all the discipline of this day, may we be entering farther and farther into the kingdom of thy Son, and approaching ever nearer to thy throne, and

preparing ourselves for higher scenes and a purer happiness beyond the grave; and thine, O God, shall be the praise and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

II.

In the morning, O God, the voice of praise shall ascend to Thee in the heavens, for thy providence has overshadowed us, and Thou hast watched over our defenceless slumbers. Again the light of day returns, and all thy works break forth before Thee into singing. The heavens declare thy glory. The earth rejoices, and is glad, at the visits of thy love. And we, formed in thy likeness, endowed with thine inspiration, would join with universal nature, and call upon all around and within us to magnify thy holy Name.

But how shall we approach Thee? What offerings shall we bring? The sacrifices of the Lord are a broken and contrite spirit. A broken and a contrite heart thou wilt not despise. More pleasing is it to thee than clouds of incense and the smoke of a thousand altars. Prepare this offering for thyself, and give us now those humble and fervent dispositions of

mind so precious in thy sight. Then shall our acts of worship find acceptance with Thee, and the lifting up of our heart be as the morning sacrifice, and an instant answer be returned to our prayers in the peace of holy affections, in devout thoughts, kindled by thy spirit shining and burning within.

Almighty God! May this day be thine, and every event which it brings come to our souls, a messenger from heaven, to lead us nearer to Thee, to increase our faith and hope and love. In the world we shall meet temptation; but may we be of good cheer and overcome the world, and keep ourselves unspotted from its corruptions. May we hold our appetites in the strictest subjection to thy pure law, written upon our hearts and commanding us to abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good; and let us not in any unguarded moment fall into any sinful indulgence, into the bondage of any base habit. To this end, and for the sake of our souls' salvation, do Thou inspire us with a godly penetrating fear. We have offended against Thee in times past. May we do so no more! May the thought of our sins break down our pride, lest, through a vain self confidence, we fall into temptation

and a snare. Habitually conscious of our exposure, may we be serious and watchful unto prayer, and pass this day of our sojourning on earth as in thy holy presence. In every righteous purpose, in every virtuous emotion, there, may we discern the agency of thy spirit working in us to will and to do. And may this be the rock of our faith, the fountain of our strength, the pledge of our triumph, that Thou, the Lord God Omnipotent, dost inspire and sanctify and assist all good resolutions, all right aims. It is thine own awful voice which speaks in our souls.

In our intercourse with one another and with our fellow men this day may we be governed by the generous spirit of the religion which we profess, and find our standard and guide in the life of him who went about doing good and poured out his blood upon the cross for the salvation of the world. May we be cautious and just in our judgments, slow to condemn, swift to forgive. Let not our sympathies be restricted by outward distinctions; but in the poorest and most despised, beholding our brethren and thy children, may we be ready to aid the feeble, and resist all injustice and cruelty; remembering that, inasmuch as we do good to the least of our brethren, we

shall be accounted as doing it unto him who was the friend and brother of all men, and thy beloved Son. As his disciples we offer these our petitions, acknowledging thy goodness, seeking thy grace, and ascribing unto Thee all praise and glory for ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

III.

O Thou at whose word the sun ariseth, and man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening, we invoke thy presence. We ask thy blessing. Without Thee we can do nothing. With Thee we can have nothing to fear. Thou art all in all. For every step that we take, for every breath that we draw, strength cometh from Thee; and thy favour is life, and thy loving kindness better than life.

Make us deeply sensible this day of our dependence upon Thee; and for every duty may we be strengthened by the thought of thy presence. Lift Thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Wherever we go, in the busiest moments, and amidst the noise and hurry of the world, let thy voice be heard, above the din of earth, in our hearts, and thy peace cause all around and within to

shine with the serene unfading brightness of heaven.

When we are tempted to forget Thee, O God, and yield to the solicitations of the flesh and the world, O send down thy spirit like a ray of light upon our path, and deliver us from evil. Keep our feet from falling, our eyes from tears and our souls from death. If, in thy good providence, the labours of the day are crowned with success, and our blessings are multiplied, let us not be so lifted up as to imagine that the mountain of our prosperity can never be moved; but, in the midst of health, may we remember Thee, our Witness and Judge, and use every blessing as a sacred gift. Save us from selfishness and hardness of heart. May it be our chiefest joy to minister of our plenty to the poor, and to prove ourselves faithful stewards of thy bounty. If this day should bring us disappointment and suffering and tears, in the darkness as well as in the light may we trace the working of thy power, and consider that the same Being, unchangeable in goodness, the Lord God gracious and merciful, gives and takes away, and for the same wise purposes, and still may we bless thy name.

We pray for every inmate of this house-

hold. For those who have advanced some way on the journey of life, that Thou wouldst sanctify all their experience, and teach them daily to gather wisdom, that every day may bring them nearer to heaven. For the young also, who look forward with ardent hopes, and whose inexperience dreams not of the snares and pitfalls hidden in the deceitful paths of pleasure, our hearts ascend in prayer. Be thy grace their shield. Lead them in the way of religious obedience, which is full of pleasantness and peace. [Hear the fervent supplications of parental affection in their behalf.] Teach them early to know themselves, to guard their lips and lives from every thing that defiles. Make them a blessing to their day and generation.

O God, Supreme Disposer of our lot, we know not what Thou hast in store for us. But this we know (blessed be thy name for the knowledge!) that nothing takes place without Thee. With regard to all outward things, may the uniform language of our hearts be, "God's will be done." We know not what is best for us; and were we left to choose for ourselves, we should mistake evil for good and darkness for light. We rejoice that there is one infinitely wise and

kind to take care of us and of ours. Do with us and for us as seemeth to Thee best.

While we would hold all earthly blessings in submission to thy will, for the gifts of thy spirit we would hunger and thirst unceasingly. Give us pure thoughts and single aims. Give us love towards Thee and charity towards our neighbour. From all the changes of life, from its joys and its sorrows, may our immortal souls gather new strength. Be this day to us the beginning of a new and divine life. May it bear away the record of our progress in knowledge and virtue, and add to the treasure of our holy recollections; and so may every coming day be richer than the last. Thus living and growing in righteousness, daily strengthened with might in the inner man, we shall be armed for all trials; and Thou wilt permit no temptation to assail us greater than we are able to resist. And when our last hour shall come, and we enter the dark valley, bidding farewell to this mortal scene, Thou wilt be our rock and our refuge. Thy rod and thy staff will comfort us. We shall fall asleep in thine everlasting arms, and awake amidst the joys of thy presence. We know not how near that hour may be. Whenever it approaches, may it find us

ready, like servants waiting for their master, all arrayed for his presence, all prepared to enter into his joy. And to Thee, Merciful Father, we will ascribe the grace and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

IV.

We thank thee, O God, for the pleasant light of life, and for that gracious providence which again pours around us the cheerful beams of the morning. O may our progress in wisdom and holiness be like the dawning light, silently and steadily growing brighter and brighter till it is full day! We bow ourselves before thee in adoration and prayer, and invoke thy spirit, the spirit of life and of love, to sanctify our hearts and our lips. Let not our devotion grow cold under the repetition of this sacred service; but by the praises and supplications of every morning and every evening, may the pure fire of religion be fed in our souls, and kindled into a flame never to be extinguished!

We bless Thee, Almighty Father, for the possession of life and for the knowledge which is given us of its origin and its end. Thou

hast created us, and not we ourselves. Not unto us but unto Thee be the praise! Our existence is not an accident, but thy free gift. Thou art the father of our spirits, and the mysterious life that is in us is thine own inspiration. We have not been cast, worthless weeds, upon the dark shores of being, but, living immortal existences, we were brought hither in thine invisible arms. We exist, not for any temporary purpose, but for thine eternal will, even that we may be fellow labourers with Thee, and share in thy power and blessedness. To fit us for this high office and destiny, Thou hast made us but little lower than angels, and crowned us with glory and honour, and given us dominion over the works of thy hands. How hast Thou encompassed us with the means and opportunities of a divine life! Light shines from heaven. In Jesus Christ we have a living revelation of thy will and our duty as thy children, and he has called us to be perfect as Thou art perfect. And as if all this were not enough, for our sakes has he suffered and died, that his costly blood, speaking better things than the blood of Abel, announcing the unfathomable depths of his love and of thine, might cleanse us from all sin. Every day and every hour thy spirit wrestles with our spirits. Every object that

we look upon is a memorial of thy love and of our obligations. Every event of life speaks to us of Thee.

And now another day has come, bringing messages from heaven. May it carry away new testimony to our fidelity. Through all that it brings of duty, of trial and of enjoyment, let us never lose sight of the great end for which this life on earth is given. In the humblest employments to which it may call us, may we remember our exalted vocation as thy children and heirs of immortality. Whether we eat or drink, may we do all to thy glory, bearing it always in mind that the most familiar occasions are opportunities of faith, submission and charity. Ever mindful of our own weakness, may we bear with the weaknesses of others. Considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted, may we be considerate and forbearing in our judgments. Save us from a selfish devotion to our own advantage in forgetfulness of the claims of our fellow men. May we be on our guard against all those foolish and hurtful lusts which war against the sacred life of the soul, and live temperately, righteously and godly.

Gracious Father, should this day be the

last on earth to us, as it will be to thousands, should the angel of death arrest us in the midst of our active pursuits, O may we be found in the way of righteousness! But, God of mercy, cut us not off in our sins. Spare us that we may turn unto Thee. Order all circumstances, life and death, for our spiritual and everlasting good. Help us this day to avoid every thing offensive in thy pure sight. As we love life and desire to see good days, may we keep our tongues from evil, and our lips that they speak no guile. Give us inward purity that we may see Thee and things invisible, and meekness of spirit that we may enter into the kingdom of heaven and ever more live above the world while we are in it.

The blessings which we ask for ourselves, wilt thou bestow also upon those who are dear to us. By the diligent discharge of our respective duties, by striving each one to act well his allotted part, may we be knit together in faith and hope, and look forward to a blessed hour, when, after all the trials and separations of this life, we shall meet, a happy circle around thy throne, not one lost, and dwell together in unchanging confidence for ever more.

O Thou Father of the spirits of all flesh, Thou who hast made us all of one blood, we desire the good of all men, of every name and colour and denomination. Scatter the clouds of ignorance. Break asunder the bands of sin. Rebuke the folly and wickedness of man, and inspire all with that reverence for thy truth and thy law which will make them free and incline them to break every yoke and proclaim freedom and light and good will to all who sit in darkness. Thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, for thine is the power and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

V.

Whom have we in heaven but Thee, O Thou, the only Living and the True, and there is nothing upon earth that we should desire before Thee! In Thee is our life and our hope, and from Thee cometh down every good gift. At thy bidding the shades of night have again fled. Let thy glory break upon us like the morning, and make us children of the light and of the day!

How wonderful is thy loving kindness, O Lord! Thy mercies! they are a great deep. We can do Thee no good. There is nothing that we can give Thee, for all is thine and we ourselves belong to thee. Yet dost Thou provide for our welfare as faithfully as if thine own happiness were bound up in ours. What shall we say unto thee? We can only pray that we may be deeply and habitually sensible of that goodness, the proofs of which

we are continually receiving. May it be upon thankful, lowly and obedient hearts that thy blessings descend, and may every act of our lives be a hymn of praise. Awaken within us a sense of our relations to eternity and to Thee.

Father of our spirits! we are allied to Thee by the mysterious powers of our minds, by those inward wants that hunger after perfection, and which we, in our wilful blindness, in vain seek to satisfy with the things that perish. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth the human soul after Thee, O Thou all wise and all perfect! Without Thee the spirit within can never find peace. We would seek thy presence therefore, not only to confess our dependence, but to commune with thy spirit, and feed our souls with immortal supplies by the contemplation of thy glory. May our prayers inspire, strengthen and arm us for the duties of this day; and may the experience of this day bear witness that it is a good thing to call upon God, to acknowledge his loving kindness in the morning and his faithfulness at night.

We would humble ourselves before Thee, Merciful Father; for, although we have so

often bowed at this altar and sought thine assisting grace, we have not had Thee in all our thoughts. We have given to idols, set up by our own passions, the homage which belongs only to Thee. Thine image on our souls has been defaced by sin, and evil desires have polluted our hearts. We have strayed from thy paths like lost sheep, regardless of the gracious voice of the great shepherd. O Thou, in whose presence there is joy over one sinner that repenteth, call us back, we beseech Thee. Make us to lie down in green pastures. Lead us beside the still waters. Let the delusions of this world come between us and Thee no more.

May this day be rescued from the bondage of time and sense. This day may we make a vigorous and determined resistance against every evil habit, every unlawful inclination. Let it not pass away as, alas! so many of our days have done, in forgetfulness of our highest interests, of the unspeakable value of the present hour, of the solemn consequences involved in all that we now design and do. But as thou hast again brought us to behold the light, may we shake off our spiritual slumbers, and awake to righteousness and sin no more. We pray especially that we may

be on our guard against worldliness of heart and life, stealing upon us ere we are aware, withering all our heavenward aspirations, despoiling us of the will to cherish high aims, and inducing us to walk contentedly in a vain show, to live as if this life were all, and the solemn things of the invisible world were but uneasy dreams. Quicken our sense of right and of wrong, of holy and unholy, and may we flee the slightest appearance of evil, and keep our hearts with all diligence, knowing that out of them are the issues of life or of death.

Go with us, O Thou Preserver of our lives, wherever we go this day. In danger let thy Providence protect us. May every duty be made sacred to our minds as the commandment of God, every blessing enhanced as thy gift, every sorrow alleviated as appointed by Thee. May this day, which brings us nearer to the grave, bring us nearer to heaven. In the faithful performance of duty, by the exercises of Christian faith and charity, may we have a foretaste this day of heavenly joys.

Let our friends also share in the same blessings. Bless them with health. Crown them with thine everlasting favour and make them and us the friends of Jesus and of God,

and fit us for the fellowship of the saints in light; and thine, O Father, shall be the praise and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

VI.

Eternal and ever blessed God! No words of ours, neither the tongues of men nor of angels, can show forth thy pure, uncreated, infinite, glory. Praised be that goodness which has made us, creatures of yesterday, capable of approaching Thee, although at the humblest distance, and of cherishing some faint impressions of thy greatness and majesty! Strengthen these impressions, we pray Thee, now when we take thy holy name upon our unworthy lips. O that we might now rise above ourselves, and leave all earth born thoughts behind us, and ascend into thine unclouded presence!

Giver of life! Thou hast formed us for thy service. Thy mercies, like a host of ministering spirits, do continually beseech us to present ourselves living sacrifices unto God, holy and acceptable. When we came into

being, how was every provision made for our protection in the love of our parents and the tender watchfulness of friends! Long before we knew whence our blessings came, or our lips could speak thy name, Thou wast our benefactor. At every step, new springs of life and joy have been opened before us. Even when clouds and darkness have surrounded our path, still thy love was manifest, and for our benefit have we been afflicted. We bless Thee for the providence which has attended us thus far. The pleasant light of another morning has dawned, and it finds us encompassed with mercies. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and forget not any of His benefits, who forgiveth all our iniquities, who healeth all our diseases, who redeemeth our lives from destruction and crowneth us with a loving kindness and tender mercy!

But, O Father, it is in vain that we pretend to be grateful, since our lives, which speak so much louder than our lips, show that we have been ungrateful and disobedient. We have sinned before Thee, and are no more worthy to be called thy children. Still thy mercy endureth for ever. Like the forgiving father who beheld his returning son while he was yet a great way off, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed

him, thy paternal arms are stretched out to us still. Hast Thou not given thy Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer and die for us? How shalt Thou not with him also freely give us all things! As his disciples, unworthy indeed and greatly in need of mercy, we would present ourselves with filial boldness at the throne of thy grace, and ask thy blessing.

We know not, O God, whither this day may lead us. We know only that it will lead us nearer to the grave—to that hour when the sun, which has now again risen upon us, will shine for us no more, and we shall be summoned to receive according to the deeds done in the body. May we walk before Thee with pure and upright hearts. Let us not for a moment forget that Thou, Lord, seest us at home and abroad, that our hearts are open and bare to thy view. In every part of duty, may it be our ruling aim to fashion our conduct by the divine law. May the time past suffice us in which to have wrought the will of the flesh. Let the thought of our past unprofitableness prompt us to redeem this day from the bondage of the world, and to spend it in earnest endeavours to correct whatever is wrong in our lives, to cultivate every generous disposition, to abound

more and more in love towards God and charity towards all men. In every situation, however homely and obscure, may we see the path of heavenly glory lying open before us and ascending to thy throne. Let there be no limits to our hopes and aims, but, as Thou hast formed us for increasing progress, let nothing less satisfy us. Neglecting the things that are behind, may we press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ our Saviour, seeking to be perfect, even as Thou, our Father in heaven, art perfect.

If Thou shouldst see fit to appoint unto us, this day, sorrow and suffering, should our dearest earthly blessings be taken away, let every murmur die upon our lips, lost in the thought of thine abounding favour. May we habitually consider that we have no claim upon Thee, that we do not deserve the least of thy blessings, that life and all its joys are the free gifts of thy grace, which we have done nothing to demand. Whatever befalls us, may we have strength to say in all sincerity of heart, "It is the Lord, though he slay us, yet will we trust in him." If our plans and hopes are prospered this day, save us from ingratitude and pride. As thy blessings are

multiplied, so may our thankfulness increase. May we acknowledge the claims of our brethren upon our sympathy and aid. Let us never turn a deaf ear to the cry of distress. Make us the instruments of thy mercy, and may we so cause our light to shine that it may penetrate the hearts of all around, and lead them to glorify Him to whom alone all glory belongs.

O Thou who hearest prayer, we have spread out our wants before Thee. Hear us in mercy, and have regard unto thy servants, not according to their merits, but in the fulness of thy love, and unto Thee be rendered everlasting praises. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

VII.

God of our lives! Maker of heaven and of earth, who dost every morning command the light to shine out of darkness, shine into our hearts now, and give us the light of the knowledge of thy glory. Let an everlasting day dawn within us. As we have risen refreshed by repose, we would go forth this morning with heart and hand ready for every good work. We would return to the active duties of life with a fresh sense of the great value of life, and more deeply impressed than ever by the thought of the momentous consequences involved in all that we do. But without Thee all our strength is naught, and we labour in vain. Grant us thy blessing. God be with us this day to guard and guide!

Feeble are we, O our Father, and life is a scene of constant danger. The foes of our inward peace assail us in the most deceitful

forms, and our own hearts are treacherous. Without unsleeping vigilance and earnest prayer, we may go far astray from the path of life, and miss the only true fountains of life, and find all our labour vanity, vexation and anguish of spirit. We would flee to the shadow of thine all protecting wings. Thou art our refuge, and what are we without thine ever present care!

How deep and hearty should be our gratitude! How should we call upon our souls and all that is within us to rejoice in Thee, almighty to protect and to save, the God of our salvation, whose bounty the multitude of our wants cannot weary, whose mercy all our sins, though they are many and great, cannot exhaust! Be thou ever present, in thy pure glory, to our hearts. Having Thee ever before our eyes, how shall we bear ever again to yield to evil solicitations or do any thing offensive in thy sight! How can we ever disregard thy will so clearly expressed or violate thy perfect law written on our hearts, announced by all thy works, vindicated by the whole course of thy providence, and revealed in a living form in the person of thy Son, our Saviour! Be Thou thus within us a preserving presence. Give us the most exalted con-

ceptions of thy being, a practical conviction of thy nearness. At home and abroad, in our public walks, in our deepest retirement, let the fear of God restrain and the love of God animate us.

Father in heaven, may no corrupting inclinations be fostered in our bosoms this day. May we be pure hearted and single minded, and possess a perfect command over our passions, lest they alienate us from thee and put us at enmity with thy perfect purity, and cut us off from the light and blessedness of thy presence. Let not our imaginations give a false value to the fleeting gratifications of time and sense. Let us not look too fondly at the things which are seen and temporal, and mistake the shadow for the reality, the glare of the world for the eternal light of truth. May our hearts be set upon the attainment of inward, thorough, personal holiness. And until this be secured, may we feel that we have done nothing and gained nothing, however otherwise the labour of our hands may, in thy providence, be prospered. Save us from the tyranny of ungoverned passions, from those evil practices and habits which despoil the soul of all power and peace and cast it into outer darkness!

We sustain numerous and interesting relations to one another and to the world. Help us this day faithfully to discharge every social duty. May we be governed in all the transactions of this day by the strictest principles of honourable dealing. Let no pride or vanity blind us to the sacred rights of others and induce us to take unfair advantage of their ignorance, or to exult in their infirmities. Be that divine charity our governing principle, that charity which is the bond of Christian perfection, the brightest ornament of the Christian life, that charity which hopeth all things and endureth all things, rejoicing not in iniquity but in the truth. In this spirit may we never deny the claim which all men of every name and denomination have upon our sympathy and respect. May we forgive the injurious as we hope to be forgiven of God, and do unto others as we would they should do unto us.

Make this day, Almighty God, a day of steady improvement. Sanctify all its enjoyments. Disarm all its temptations. May every hour be spent in thy service. Should any calamity befall us, should sickness and death enter this dwelling, may we receive

them as sent from God upon an errand of mercy. Whatever may be the course of thy providence, let our souls rejoice in thy goodness, and then we shall not fear though the earth be removed out of its place and the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea. Give us this trust in life and in death, and be Thou, O God, our everlasting portion; and unto thee will we ascribe the glory and the praise for ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

VIII.

Let the heavens rejoice and let the whole earth be glad, for Thou, the Lord God omnipotent, reignest, and all, from the greatest to the least, are upheld by thine arm, which never grows weary. No creature of thy hand is insignificant in thy sight. The earth is but a point in the immensity of thy dominions. Yet we, whose habitation it is, are every moment visited by thy goodness, and Thou hast formed the great fabric of nature to minister to our humble wants. Thou givest us the night for repose. And now again for us the sun sheds abroad its light, and we awake to rejoice in thy glory filling earth and sky, and to partake of thine exhaustless bounty.

We would go forth this day bearing on our hearts a grateful sense of thy mercy. Not for health, not for worldly prosperity, not for life even, would we now offer our

petition; for these, dear as they are to us, and even because they are so dear, may lead us into many deadly snares, and endanger our souls' peace, which were we to lose, what would it profit us to gain the whole world! But our prayer is, that in all the ways in which thy providence may lead us this day, we may have Thee always before us and in our hearts to love and serve with an entire mind. Let a sense of our great obligations as moral and accountable beings be something more than an occasional thought. Be it our deepest conviction, never violated, never for a single moment forgotten, a lamp to our feet, a light to our paths. And may every thing that befalls us this day, whether joyous or sorrowful, tend to strengthen this inward principle. From every event may we extract spiritual nourishment. By the experience of life may our perceptions of right and of wrong grow more refined and delicate, so that we may detect all the disguises of our own hearts, and cleanse our motives from every thing sordid and base. Give us light within to make the way plain before us, to illuminate all outward circumstances, to show us sin in all its deformity, although it comes like an angel of light, and to enable us to discern the right and to cleave to it, notwithstanding all diffi-

culty and opposition. Especially do we pray to be saved from the power of the world, and the fashion thereof. May we be true to ourselves in word and deed, unmoved by the rewards and flatteries of human opinion, holding the approbation of God and our own consciences as above all price, and never hesitating which we shall serve, Thee or the world.

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, teach us to look unto him—to perceive the beauty of his character, his generous heart, his habitual humility, his perfect devotion to truth. Be it our constant endeavour to fashion ourselves by him, to live as he lived, and, if need be, to die like him. Deliver us from pride and vanity and an inordinate love of self. Save us from a cold, unsympathizing temper. In all our intercourse this day with others, may we be slow to adopt injurious suspicions, and eager to extenuate and forgive whatever seems in them amiss. May we honour all men as brethren of one family, children of one Father, aspirants after the same blessedness. In us may the wretched find helpers, and the erring, guides. And may all men take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, beholding in us something

of the loveliness that shone so brightly in him. Let not the humbleness of our lot, the narrowness of our sphere, destroy our holy aspirations, or induce us to content ourselves with a conformity to the low standards of the world! But, as every hour offers opportunity for that spirit of truth and love which is the spirit of God, may we set our whole hearts upon heavenly things. So, being faithful here and now, we shall be made meet for an everlasting kingdom and a celestial crown, and shall hear the joyful welcome, "Well done! good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

When the hour of departure shall come, Thou, O God, alone knowest. May the uncertainty of life cool the ardour of our earthly pursuits and moderate our attachments; and since we are steadily approaching the grave, let us not madly cling to those things which we cannot carry beyond it, but may we lay up that inward treasure of which death cannot rob us, and, possessed of the unsearchable riches of righteousness, be prepared for all coming changes, and for that last and great change that shall summon us to thy bar. God in his infinite mercy grant that we may find acceptance then, and that this day may not rise up in judgment against

us! Once more we ask thy guidance and blessing. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and thy love and the sanctifying power of thy spirit be with us now and ever more, and to Thee shall be rendered everlasting praises. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

IX.

Our Father who art in heaven, Thou hast given us life, and thy power protects and thy bounty feeds us. We have slept in safety. Thine ever-watchful eye has never for a moment been withdrawn from us. Again we awake to behold thy glory. Awaken Thou our hearts to thankfulness and praise; and make us to hear the harmonious hymns of gratitude for ever ascending from all thy works, the morning stars singing together, and all the sons of God shouting for joy. We would join our voices with theirs, and magnify thy great and holy Name, O Thou who dwellest in eternity, and to whom belong all might, dominion and majesty!

But, Great God, the visible creation, the things that we see, these are but a portion of thy ways. These are but the borders of thy works. All that we hear of thee by the outward ear is but a whisper of thy greatness.

Father of our spirits! Thou hast formed us in the image of thine invisible glory. The intelligence that dwells mysteriously in these frail forms of flesh is thine inspiration. Thou hast given us the power of discerning not only the creature but the Creator, not only thy works in all their order and beauty, but Thee in the infinitude of thy majesty. By the light of day again shining around us, we perceive the things that are made. But Thou hast set a brighter light in our inmost being, whereby we have the knowledge of the invisible God, and read thy sacred law, and discern the way of truth and holy obedience, which will lead us above the world, beyond the power of time and the corruptions and decays of the flesh, even unto life eternal, and into thy most intimate presence. Blessed, for ever blessed be the grace which out of the dust of the earth would raise up children unto God and lead them unto glory!

Grant, O God ever bountiful and gracious, grant that this day we may bear our high vocation every hour in mind. The sacred fire in our bosoms, O let it not burn upon the unclean altars of this world's idols! Save us from an inordinate attachment to the riches and show of life, from the bondage of our

lower appetites, from the wickedness of sinning against Thee the only rightful object of our love, from all malice and envy and hardness of heart, from evil speaking and wrong doing, from pride and levity. May we bear about with us in all the concerns of this day a fixed conviction of our relation to things unseen. And when we are tempted to do what our own consciences do not sanction, what thy voice condemns, O may we pause as on the brink of a precipice, and take care how we throw down our crowns of glory into the defiling dust, and see to it with unsleeping vigilance that we are not despoiled of the power and will to serve Thee! We would not be indifferent to the slightest shadow or degree of sin. When we go out and when we come in, when we eat and when we drink, when we speak and when we are silent, be thy spirit, the spirit of truth, ever present with us, to purify our lips, to guard our thoughts and to sanctify all our ways. May we do justly and provide things honest in the sight of all men, and love mercy, and walk humbly before Thee, O God! Let us not be so blinded by self-love as to deem that venial in ourselves which we regard as criminal in other men. Cause us to see how very liable we are to think more highly of ourselves than we ought

to think, to take merit to ourselves, to confide in our own strength, and close our eyes to the sins which so easily beset us. May it be deeply impressed on our minds this day and all our days, that if we would be perfect, if we would do the work which thou hast given us to do, we must carry on a constant warfare, following Jesus Christ, the great captain of our salvation, and contending bravely with the cunning devices of our own minds, resisting manfully the first approaches of sin. May we feel that it is no light thing to live wisely and well, and, using all diligence, may we make our calling and election sure. Let thy blessing attend us, and, through thy grace, the victory shall be ours.

Almighty Father, go with us all, [parents and children] every member of this family, through all the trials and duties of this day. [May we, upon whom the sacred obligations of the parental office rest, walk before our household in the fear of God. For our own sake and for our children's, for the sake of all who come within the circle of our influence, may thy Word, written in the heart, declared by thy Son, be the rule by which we live and move and have our being; and may our children be thy children. They *are* thine al-

ready, O Father, and feeble is the love which we bear them in comparison with thine. To thy grace, which is able and willing to build them up and give them an everlasting inheritance of honour and glory, we commend them. Guard them from the evil that is in the world. Crown them with every temporal good and with thy choicest blessings.] We pray for all men: for the aged that their declining years may find a staff in Thee; for the prosperous, that they may be prepared for the evil day; for those to whom thy Providence has assigned a lowly lot, that it may be irradiated by the light of thy spirit which maketh all things divine. Fill all hearts with the joy and gladness of thy presence, and let thy will be done by men on earth as it is by angels in heaven, and to Thee shall be the glory for ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

X.

O God, almighty and ever present, Thou dost wondrous things in heaven and on earth. Thou hast made these great lights, the sun to rule by day, the moon and stars by night. Thou givest food to all flesh. We would give thanks to Thee, the God of heaven, for thy goodness is from everlasting to everlasting, and day and night the arm of thy power is stretched out for the guidance and protection of every creature of thy hand. Praise the Lord, O our souls, and all that is within us and around us bless His holy name! Praise ye Him, all his angels! Praise ye Him, thou sun and all ye hosts of light! Let them praise Thee, O thou God of infinite majesty; for at thy command they shine forth out of darkness, and obey thy decrees which shall never pass.

Greatest of beings, Thou dost call thyself our Father. By this confiding name we are

encouraged to address Thee. From the light uncreated, inaccessible and full of glory in which Thou dwellest for ever, Thou hast extended towards us the sceptre of thy mercy, and there cometh forth a voice, heard in our inmost souls, calling unto us to give Thee our hearts, to walk in thy ways, to submit every faculty and every thought to thy wise and holy will, and so to attain to the unspeakable blessedness of a perfect and everlasting union with God. To the multitude of thy blessings add this great grace, willing minds to hear and accept these heavenly invitations. Let us not put them by with the false hope of a more convenient season. But now let us resolve that we will serve the Lord our God and him only. This day may the bewildering noises of the world, the clamorous importunities of our own passions, be hushed, and in all things may we give implicit obedience to thy voice. Make it sweeter than music to our ears. By its guidance this day may we avoid every path of sin, and be led onward in the straight and narrow way.

Help us, we pray thee, to form habits of earnest self-inspection; to keep a watchful eye upon the first tendencies to evil in our own bosoms; to remember every hour that

the kingdom to which we are called, with all the power and glory thereof, is within, that here in the heart our deadliest foes are to be met and subdued, here thy throne is to be set up, and a habitation prepared by repentance and humility and faith and purity and love for that spirit which the heaven of heavens cannot contain. Because the world does not condemn, and friends flatter and approve, let us not therefore relax our self-watchfulness, but may we be only the more carefully on our guard, knowing how prone we are to be self-deceived, and to forget that man looketh only on the outward appearance, whilst Thou, O God, lookest into the heart.

We pray for an unwearied spirit of humanity to regulate all our intercourse with the world, to save our minds from the wasting fire of angry passions, from a malignant and vindictive temper. If it be possible, may we live peaceably with all men, using always the words of kindness and patience that turn away wrath, overcoming evil with good, and always just even to those who are unjust to us. Such, O God, is our weakness, that there are no relations of life so intimate and endearing as to be safe against the miseries of unkindness and ill will. Here, at home, in the

domestic circle, may we take heed to our ways, and rely not altogether upon our natural affections, however strong, but seek strength, where alone it can be found, in religious principle, in habitual self-command. Write the law of Christian love upon our hearts, and let our lips obey it. [May we, whom Thou hast bound by parental obligations, be endued with that wisdom which cometh down from heaven, which is gentle, and which dwells with prudence. Let us not provoke our children to wrath, but teach them patience and submission by our daily example, and bring them up in the spirit of Him who took children in his arms and blessed them. Have them, we beseech Thee, in thy holy keeping this day. Keep them in the ways of innocency and peace, and save them from the wretchedness of ungoverned passions, from the misery and the guilt of abusing their powers, those sacred gifts of God.]

Grant, O our Father, that this day, whether it be a day of gladness or of sorrow, may be spent acceptably to Thee, and profitably to ourselves. Sanctify to our best good whatever trials it may bring, and may thoughts of thy love heighten all its enjoyments. As we have eyes to see, let us not look idly and in

vain upon the great spectacle of life, but from all its changes may we draw wisdom and strength, and see all things as they are, and neglect nothing that is important, and magnify nothing that is trifling. Through all events, thy spirit is for ever teaching lessons of heavenly import. As we have ears to hear, may we take heed how we hear. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

XI.

O Thou whose power preserves us in life, guarding our slumbers, guiding our steps, we would bring Thee our morning sacrifice of praise, for Thou, O Lord, hast dealt bountifully with us. The night has been spent in refreshing repose, and the morning continues and renews thy countless blessings. O let it not find us cold and insensible! With the dawning of the visible light, may the light of thy spirit beam upon our souls, and awaken them and all that is within us to adoration and joy, and may we draw nigh unto Thee now with the offerings of our hearts as well as of our lips. Draw nigh unto us, and may the elevation of our thoughts, the confirmation of our good purposes, effectually promoted by every act of worship, bear witness how good a thing it is to seek thy grace, and hold communion with the Father of our spirits.

Blessed be thy name that we are permitted to know Thee, and that, in innumerable ways, thou art revealing to us thy glory! Every thing that we see, every change that we witness, speaks to us of thine agency and makes known thy mind and will. The whole creation is a revelation of God. Thou hast placed in our bosoms an ever present witness of thyself, to teach us what Thou wouldst have us to do. Thou hast given us a religion of light and hope in the glorious gospel of thy holy Son. Nothing has been left undone to bring us, creatures of the dust, into communion with thy spirit. How plainly is the path of duty thrown open before us! What inducements have we to press steadily onward in that straight and upward way! With what care hast Thou surrounded us! From the whole course of events, from all our experience of life, from our own hearts, abroad and at home, ten thousand voices of admonition and encouragement call to us to acquaint ourselves with God, to be reconciled unto Thee, and so to obtain that divine peace which passeth all understanding.

Almighty God, we pray that these thoughts may guard and guide our minds this day, that we may consider more fully than we ever yet have done the awful presence in which we

live, that at all times, and especially when we are in danger of falling into sin, the fear of God may be upon our souls, to arrest the evil thought and inspire us with strength to withstand every temptation. Save us, we beseech Thee, from that heedlessness, that levity of mind and conduct, which so ill becomes beings who have eternal interests at stake. Let us not trifle with ourselves and with the great opportunities of life, yielding to every random impulse, but may we be governed by a living principle of religious faith, prompting us to ask, in every case of difficulty and trial, how we shall render ourselves acceptable in the sight of our ever present Witness and righteous Judge. May we be diligent in our several places, and do Thou crown our diligence with thy blessing. Let not the labour of our hands be in vain, but may we this day acquire treasure in heaven, the incorruptible riches of a pure heart, that wealth within, of which no outward vicissitudes, not even death itself, can deprive us.

Dispose us to cultivate every social affection. Make us to see how much more blessed it is to give than to receive, to minister to the wants of others than to pamper ourselves. In each one of us create a lowly, self-forgetting

heart, after the likeness of thy Son, our Saviour. May we be disposed to bear one another's burthens, to make every allowance for our respective infirmities of temper, bearing with one another, forgiving one another, never forgetting how greatly we ourselves need thy mercy.

We look back upon the past, O God, and lo! goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives. We would look forward to the future with undoubting faith in the continuance of thy love. Never, through the blindness of our own will, never may the hand of God be hidden from us in any event of life, however trying it may be, however suddenly it may befall us. When Thou givest and when Thou takest away, in joy and in affliction, in life and in death, may we still rejoice in Thee, the God of our salvation, and know in whom we have believed. Evermore may we put our whole trust in thy mercy, and never may our souls, in an evil hour, be withdrawn from this all-sufficient refuge. O Thou who makest all things to work together for good, let us have no will but thine, and may thy will, working within us to will and to do, be fulfilled in every action of our lives. Every day may we be ascending into a more perfect

union with the spirits of the good and just on earth and in heaven, with Jesus Christ thy Son, and with Thee, the Fountain of life and blessedness. So, before we die, we shall pass from death unto life, and rise from earth to heaven, and, before we put off these frail garments of flesh, we shall be clothed with immortality, and, by thy spirit in our hearts, shall know the joys of an eternal existence.

We ask and offer all things, relying upon thine infinite mercy, so divinely revealed in all thy works and ways, and most brightly of all in thy beloved Son, for whom we bless Thee and ascribe unto Thee praise and glory without end. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

XII.

O Thou who art great, and greatly to be praised, whose greatness is unsearchable, every day will we bless Thee! Whether awake or asleep we are surrounded by Thee. We hear the voice of thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy hand leads us forth, and thy bounties are heaped up around us in measureless profusion. We would raise our eyes from the multitude of thy mercies to Thee, the God of all mercy. Help us now to see Thee as thou art, infinite in every perfection, to contemplate and adore thy glory, so that, although every earthly blessing should be taken away, and the sun that has now risen should see us, ere it sets, stripped of our abounding comforts and left mourning and desolate, we may still bless thy name, and love Thee for thyself alone, with all our might and mind and strength.

Holy, holy, holy art Thou, Lord God Almighty, of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity. Even the angels are chargeable with folly, and the heavens are not clean in thy sight. What are we that we should take thy name upon our unworthy lips, we, who have so often turned away from Thee and from thy pure commandments, we, whose hearts have so often been inflamed with unhallowed desires, so often debased by evil devices! But, great God, while the thought of thy goodness humbles us, it does at the same time awaken in us confidence and hope. We appear before Thee unworthy and undeserving. We have no merits to plead. But Thou art boundless in love, and in thy love is all our reliance. Here is our rock and our refuge, in thy mercy, which endureth to all generations. And although we have sinned against Thee, and are not worthy to be called thy children, and are at best but unprofitable servants, still Thou dost regard us with paternal love. No language of ours, though we spake with the tongues of angels, can describe the fulness of thy grace. Penetrate and fill our hearts with a sense of thy mercy. Let thy goodness lead us to forsake every sinful way, and to consecrate ourselves freely, fully, without reserve, to the doing of thy will.

In the spirit of the prayer that we have now uttered, may we spend the day, which, through thy good providence we are permitted to see; may it be a day holy and acceptable in thy sight, a day full of good works, a day of active usefulness, of unintermitted kindness, a day that shall carry us onward and upward, and call forth and exercise every virtuous affection. This day may we be saved from all unlawful self-indulgence, and may the sins which most easily beset us lose their power, never more to be regained. Clothe Thou us with the garments of salvation, and cover us with righteousness as with a robe. And then, although we should be called hence at a moment when we think not, we shall be all arrayed to enter into the joy of our Lord, and to share in the diviner labours of another scene of being.

Father, we bless Thee that thou hast formed us for life never-ending; that we have faculties which crave ceaseless progress, which urge us onward to perfection, and which nothing less will appease. We rejoice in the triumphant assurance of immortality, given us by thy Son. As he lives and as we live by him, in his spirit, we shall live also. Never may our minds lose for a moment the con-

sciousness of our destiny. Never may we live as if this life were every thing, and its fleeting shows were our highest enjoyments; but may we ever bear ourselves as becometh those who discern eternity all around and within.

Let no differences of outward condition hide from us the divine image stamped upon every soul of man, but may we honour all men as the immortal offspring of God. Let not our human sympathies sicken and die away in tears. But as we pray for our brethren, may we always be ready to toil for them, and, if occasion arise, suffer loss for their sakes, counting it all joy that, at any price of our own ease, we can follow in the blessed steps of him who died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God.

Have every member of this family, young and old, under thy saving guidance this day, and bring us, at its close, again to meet around this altar, here to mingle our hearts in prayer. The ties of nature, O God, are strong, but do Thou give them that strength which cometh only from thy spirit dwelling in our hearts. Sanctify us by thy truth. Thy word is truth. Write that word upon our hearts, and let our

whole lives proclaim it; so shall we be living epistles, written of God, and known and read of all men. Make us all thine, wholly thine. Be our guardian and guide in life, and in death our everlasting portion, and thine, O God, shall be the praise. Not unto us—not unto us, but unto thy name shall be the glory for ever and ever! *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

XIII.

Boundless art Thou, O Thou whom no eye can see and no tongue can name, boundless in power and glory! All things are full of Thee. At thy bidding the shades of night hasten away. And now that Thou hast again covered the earth with light as with a garment, and we rejoice in the splendours of morning, we would exalt our thoughts to the contemplation of thy majesty, and seek inspiration in thy praise. Dispose our minds aright, and let thy gracious spirit, like a ministering angel, descend and set in order our affections, and build an altar in our bosoms, and prepare an offering and kindle the sacrifice, so that our prayer may rise in memorial before thee, and bring down upon us new blessings, new and precious gifts, new strength for thy blessed and everlasting service.

We are on earth, dwelling in houses of clay, exposed to dangers from without, and to far more fearful foes within; and great and constant is our need of a guiding light and a protecting arm, to keep our feet lest they fall, and our hearts, lest they mistake evil for good, and death for life. Happy were it for us if we only knew our weakness, and kept steadily in sight our liability to forget our exposure! But alas! herein is our greatest danger, that we are ever inclined to live as if life required no watchfulness and no prayer, to believe that whatsoever our hearts desire must be good and safe, and thus the soul's true peace is put in peril, and the way of life forsaken for the broad and downward paths of death.

Gracious God! stretch forth the arm of thy power. Pour down thy light into our inmost souls, and fill them with thy truth. Let no stubborn pride, no inordinate self-love, no besetting sin, have power to resist or obstruct the influence of thy grace; but do Thou enlighten our understandings, renew our hearts, subdue our headstrong wills, and may the whole course of this day show that these few moments of devotion have been blest by God, that we have enjoyed the visits of thy love, and received strength from on High.

It is our desire and prayer that we may go forth to meet the temptations of this day, even as our great guide and deliverer went forth, in the power of thy spirit, clothed with humility, having on the breastplate of righteousness, with a solemn and irrevocable determination, by thy grace, to conduct ourselves under all circumstances this day as becomes the children of God. Let us not, for a single instant, be thrown off our guard. Let no sophistry of words bewilder our consciences, and blind our eyes to the holy and everlasting distinctions of right and wrong, but even in our familiar utterances may we take heed that we offend not with our tongues, bearing ever in mind that he who offendeth not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able to bridle the whole body.

Wonderfully are we favoured, in that Thou hast given unto us to be born under a dispensation of love and liberty! From our very cradles the voice of that religion has sounded in our ears which came down from Thee, and which speaks to us not as slaves, but as friends, as the children of the Most High God. On our hearts, as well as on the sacred pages of the Gospel, Thou hast inscribed thy

just and great commands, and we are bidden to love Thee with all our strength, and our neighbour as ourselves. Be thy law fulfilled by us. To Thee may we implicitly refer ourselves, seeking thy favour, the inward assurance of union with Thee, as beyond all earthly treasure, and never may we hesitate between God and mammon, or vainly strive to serve two masters. May it ever be our first and ruling aim to do what is pleasing in thy sight, to conform every act and thought to the dictates of divine truth.

As possessors of the Gospel of love, may we be actively and unweariedly kind and generous, one toward another. May it be our care to treat others, in all respects, as we would wish to be treated ourselves. Impress it deeply upon our minds, once for all and for ever, that the right which our fellow men have to our brotherly sympathy, to whatsoever aid our hands can afford, is sacred and inalienable, far beyond the right which we claim to the perishing possessions of the world, and not to be denied by us, save to the wrong of our own souls. But, O Thou Giver of all wisdom, let not our humanity degenerate into a weak sensibility, leading us to yield to improper solicitations, to defer unduly to the authority of

men, and depriving us of all power to plead for the weak against the mighty, to resist evil when it is sanctioned by custom, and upheld by cunning and flattering words. But may we be inspired by that true charity which makes the weakest strong, and the fearful brave, and let us never think to live peaceably with the world by any sacrifice of Christian truth and integrity. O may the spirit of the holy men of old, the apostles and martyrs, the true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, live again among men, and take up an abode in our hearts, and make us ministers of truth and good, each in his place!

These our prayers have now gone forth. We cannot recall the words we have uttered. May we give good heed that our lives conform thereto, lest they rise up in judgment against us, and we be proved to be of the number of those who draw nigh unto Thee with their lips, and speak solemn words while their hearts are in captivity to their own sinful devices. Having now sought thy blessing, may we seek it without ceasing this day by every word and work; and when the sun again sinks in the west, may light and peace remain to rejoice our souls, and to prepare us for still richer blessings, for still greater pro-

gress, and a more entire consecration of our being to truth and to God. We confide in the unsearchable riches of thy love, disclosed by all thy works, but most gloriously of all by thy Son Jesus Christ, for whom we bless thee for ever and ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

XIV.

Almighty God, our shield by night, our sun by day, without whom we should cease to be, and with whom we are safe, we thank Thee for thy care, and commit ourselves to thy protection this day. Thy creatures, thy children, living under thy righteous government, and accountable to Thee who wilt render unto every man according to his works, we pray that we may keep in mind this day our solemn relations to God and to eternity. And to this end we approach Thee now, that, by meditation and prayer, we may receive strength, and fortify our good purposes, and arm ourselves for whatever conflicts await us.

O Thou Bestower of unnumbered blessings, may we have the grace to see how largely we are indebted to Thee for life and for every thing that makes life happy. We have done nothing to deserve thy bounty. It is from

the fulness of thine own beneficence that we exist, and that we possess a nature enriched with divine powers and destined for an illimitable growth. Upon every object on which we look some message of mercy is inscribed, and the whole creation wears an aspect of benignity, and beams with the light of thy countenance. O God, take away these hearts of stone, and cause a sense of thy great goodness to fill all our being. We cannot sin without being guilty of the deepest ingratitude, and sooner or later we shall hear thy voice, mighty in its tenderness, filling our inmost souls, and saying, "I have brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." Blessed Father! teach us to love Thee as we ought, with all our might and mind and strength. Thou *art* teaching us thy love in all thy works and ways. All unite to proclaim Thee, our Maker, our Friend, able and willing to bless us. Give us then, we pray, give us open minds. Incline us to acquaint ourselves with Thee, to see the hand of thy providence in every event of life, to receive all things as thine instruments, employed to express thy good will and to promote our welfare.

Let no vision of temporal good, no prospect of selfish pleasure, attract our thoughts and subjugate our wills, to the exclusion of the

great work of our souls' salvation. But may we live only for duty and for God, and may those spiritual and everlasting concerns, the highest in reality, be the highest also in our regards. Be it our first care to approve ourselves in thy pure sight. Let the world threaten or flatter as it will, make us strong and victorious in holy resolution. And, when we falter, when our passions are importunate, and temptation is pressing, O let the sacred image of thy dear Son, who was tempted as we are, but without sin—may it rise clearly, distinctly, before us, to annihilate every evil inclination and re-kindle the expiring flame of virtue in our hearts! Tearing ourselves away from the solicitations of a deceiving world, may we throw our whole souls into one vigorous effort, and so come off conquerors, through thy love, and hear the joyful words, like a voice from heaven in our hearts, "Well done! good and faithful servants!"

If this day should bring suffering, let it bring also patience. Shouldst Thou stretch forth thy hand to smite, may we consider in faith and joy that we are smitten that we may be blessed. Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every child that He receiveth. However thy discipline may be

varied, by light and by darkness, by sorrow and by joy, may we steadily grow in the knowledge and love of truth. Thou wilt never forsake us. Never wilt Thou lay any burthen upon us too heavy to be borne. Let it only be our honest endeavour to serve Thee, to discharge our duty; and thy grace, ever present to aid the weak, will suffice for all trials, and make thy strength manifest through all our weakness, and overrule all events for our good.

We pray for our friends. Fervently do we desire their health and happiness. Keep their eyes from tears and their souls from death. Help us to aid one another, to comfort the aged, and to guide the young—to minister to those who are in distress, and to rejoice with those who rejoice. Let thy spirit dwell like a dove in the heart of this household. Here, at this altar, which witnesses our daily devotions, may we each one find strength for his respective duties. Here may our natural affections be sanctified, and changed into bonds of love which nothing shall be able to sever. Give us here a foretaste of heavenly joy, and train us up for an everlasting home.

Accept our thanksgivings. May all our

sins be forsaken and forgiven; and to Thee, our Father, we will ascribe the blessing and the praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

MORNING PRAYER.

XV.

Great and everlasting God! The sun, breaking from the chambers of the east, is but a dim type of Thee, and the smallest atom that floats in its morning beams is more to this universe than the universe is to Thee! Far beyond the farthest boundaries of space and in the unsearchable depths of eternity, Thou dwellest, dread, incomprehensible, alone.

In vain, O God, do our minds attempt to fathom the mystery of thy being. It is higher than heaven, deeper than hell; what can we know? And yet, even because our minds cannot comprehend, nor our lips name Thee, Thou art the highest object of reverence, and we are drawn to meditate on thy perfections; although, were we transformed into angels and archangels, we should still know Thee only in part. After the invisible and unknown, the spirit that is within us yearns with aspirations

that cannot be uttered, and our heart and our flesh cry out after the only living and true God. These sacred desires, the breathings of thine own spirit, reveal the divinity within. But we have this priceless treasure in frail vessels of clay, and we are prone to hide it in the earth, and to live as if we were formed for no sphere but the visible one, and the pleasures of the world, which are only for a season, were enough to satisfy our whole nature. The current of worldly affairs is swift and strong, and it bears us on and away; and the Greatest of beings, Thou, ever and most intimately present, art forgotten, and our dearest interests are set aside. Almighty God! Thy power none can withstand. Let thy searching and resistless spirit, which works in all things to accomplish thy pleasure, let it work in us. Awake, O arm of the Lord, awake, put on strength, and break open our prison doors, and lead forth our spirits, held in captivity by the vain show of life. Give us to know ourselves as children of God, to discern the vast realities of that other and invisible world which is not afar off, but here, immediately here, in our own bosoms. Make us conscious of the eternity in which we live and move and have our being, and of the momentous conditions of our existence. Here

are we, day by day, hour by hour, building up characters which must survive, for weal or for woe, all the changes of life, and the last great change of death. Thou hast bound up eternal consequences in our words and works, and what Thou hast joined together no power on earth or in heaven can separate. Fervently do we pray that a sense of our responsibility may attend us this day, that, in all we do, it may be manifest that we have been with Thee, and that our great aim is to bear ourselves as the offspring of God, dwellers in eternity, aspirants after that unseen and immortal glory which awaits a true and godly life. Let thoughts of heaven sanctify every hour of this day, in private and in public, at home and abroad.

Thou hast formed us to find our duty and our happiness in the relations which bind us to one another. Here also are our trials, the trials of our faith, our love, our integrity. Give us wise and understanding hearts, that we may judge righteously, joining the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove, making the gospel of peace the rule of our conduct, and the life of thy Son our model. As we rejoice in the light of the Christian dispensation, as we hope in thy mercy to give

us an inheritance among the saints in light, as we bear the name of Christ, may we cherish his spirit, his fearless devotion to the salvation of man and the service of the living God. Let not our human sympathies be paralyzed by a timid deference to the world's opinion. Let us not be worshippers and idolaters of self; but may we hold ourselves ready for every sacrifice of our own pleasure, if thereby we may bestow a blessing upon our fellow men, and glorify Thee.

And now, O Thou God of grace, as we are about to separate, and go each one to the place assigned him in thy providence, and to the work which Thou hast given him to do, go Thou with us, and help us so to act that we may have the approbation of God and our consciences. [Have mercy upon the inexperience of the young, and when the eye of parental watchfulness is withdrawn from them, let them remember Thee, their all-seeing Creator. Be the sense of thy presence strong within them, to keep their feet from evil. Save their lips from profaneness, their hearts from the pollution of the world. Enrich them with heavenly graces. Fit them for the arduous conflicts of mature life, for a career of usefulness and an honourable old age. And grant

unto us, to whom Thou hast bound them by the strong ties of kindred, the joy which no words can express, and the loss of which no earthly treasure can supply, of seeing them growing up in the strength of virtue and in the beauty of holiness.] O may this dwelling prove a nursery of heaven, and hereafter, from the abodes of eternal peace, may we look back to this home of our affections as the spot where God and heaven were revealed, and we were introduced to a new and divine life; and thine shall be the praise and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

EVENING.

EVENING PRAYER.

I.

Almighty God! Maker, Preserver and Friend! Through thy love we are still among the living, the living to praise Thee. We thank Thee for the day that has now closed, and for all that we have enjoyed. Were we the only objects of thy care, we could not be more bountifully blessed. What is there that Thou couldst have done for us that Thou hast not done! Thou hast given us life and an exalted place in thy creation, and endowed us with powers of observation and thought. The earth under our feet is strewed with thy riches. Thou hast spread out the heavens over our heads like a curtain. Day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night showeth knowledge of Thee, the Maker of all, in whom dwells all perfection, and whom to know and love is our highest good. Thou art continually giving it to be seen that it is thine infinite and eternal delight to visit thine unworthy children and crown them with blessings.

Unto us, O God, belongeth shame, and confusion of face. We have lived, the constant spectators of thy glory, the daily recipients of thy bounty. Every morning has awakened us to new blessings; every day we have leaned upon thy arm; every night we have fallen asleep under thy watchful eye. But what returns have we made for thy numberless favours? Thou requirest only gratitude and obedience. But we have been ungrateful and disobedient. Many a time and oft we have called upon thee to witness our vows of amendment. This very morning we poured out before Thee our devout desires. But alas! with the morning cloud they vanished, and now at the close of this day we have to confess our manifold transgressions. Still, with humble confidence, we would approach Thee again, O Thou who, by the holy lips of thy Son, hast commanded us to forgive an offending brother seventy times seven! Thou art plenteous in mercy, and dost dispense thy blessings, not according to our deserts, but out of the fulness of thine own love. And if we ask with sincere and contrite hearts, Thou wilt give unto us liberally, upbraiding us not, sinners though we are.

Send down upon us now the spirit of grace and supplication that we may ask aright, that holier desires than we have ever before cherished may spring up in our hearts. Create within us an insatiable hunger after righteousness. Let not the world again have power to quench thy spirit; but may it be kindled in our bosoms, an undying flame, consuming every unhallowed lust, enlightening our understandings, purifying our whole nature. May we be thy children, sons of God, not merely as the objects of thy paternal regard, but as we cultivate the dispositions and exhibit the obedience of children. We pray that we may henceforth account it our highest glory, our best happiness, to do thy will, to conquer ourselves, to struggle earnestly with every darling sin, and trample it under our feet. In future may we be more habitually impressed with a sense of our weakness, and of our need of all those saving thoughts which a fixed, religious faith can alone supply, and to the power of which we must be for ever insensible, if we keep not our hearts with all diligence. Give us this faith, a faith by which we shall at all times and in all places walk with God, and live as seeing Thee who art unseen, a faith which shall be the armour of our souls against the fiery darts of sin.

To thy holy keeping, and to the ministrations of thy spirit, we commend ourselves and our friends, all that we hold dear on earth. We are all thine. Even the hairs of our heads are all numbered; and every thing that befalls us is ordered by perfect wisdom. Give us that entire confidence in Thee which will prepare us to meet every coming event without fear, to lie down upon our pillows this night, assured that, whether we wake or sleep, whether surrounded by light or wrapt in darkness, Thou art here. We love life and its daily enjoyments, and pray that we may see another morning in health and peace. But save us from putting our will above thine. Do with us according to thy good pleasure. One thing only is supremely desirable, that in faith we may evermore possess our souls, and here and hereafter, now and for ever, lean upon that Almighty arm which upholds all things, seen and unseen.

Should another day be granted us, may it be devoted to duty and to Thee. But if Thou shouldst see fit in thy wisdom to summon us hence before the rising of another sun, O may we awake in a better world, where suns shall rise and set no more, there to witness more

glorious instances of thy power, more touching manifestations of thy goodness; and, all our sins forgiven, be introduced to the communion of the saints in light, and unite in those ascriptions of glory which, from the abodes of the blessed, ascend to Thee for ever and ever! *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

II.

O Thou, who alone art worthy our unreserved, our profoundest homage, God and Father of all! In Thee dwells all good. From Thee descends every blessing. Our days pass away, one after another, like a tale that is told; but Thou art unchangeable. From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God.

Although we dwell in crumbling houses of clay, there is that within us, the inspiration of thy spirit, which delights in the contemplation of thine eternity. The cares of another day are ended. The silence of the night has fallen upon the world. To Thee would we raise our thoughts, and in communion with Thee find peace.

Marvellous is thy goodness, O Thou our Creator, in that Thou hast made us capable of knowing Thee. We cannot see Thee.

Yet we know that Thou art. Every thing that we look upon proclaims thy being and reveals thy perfections. Every moment brings us tokens of love from the Invisible and the All-wise. The day that has now closed, how rich has it been in the demonstrations of thy providence! Thy hand hath led us safely through its various dangers. Thy power hath fed the mysterious fountains of life in our frames. Thy bounty hath spread a table for us; and our cup has been full to overflowing with thy blessings. How can we fail to discern thy presence, and with the liveliest grat itude? O may we never more be insensible to thy goodness. Father of mercies! fill our hearts with thankfulness, and let our whole lives speak thy praise.

We thank Thee, Heavenly Parent, for our immortal nature, for the divine likeness in which we are fashioned, for the blessedness of which we are capable, and for all that Thou hast done to reveal to us the true dignity and glory of our being. In the godlike life and death of thy beloved Son, Thou hast shown us all that Thou wouldst have us to be. It should be our fervent prayer, morning, noon and night, that he may dwell within us, our model and standard in all things; that, en-

lightened by the words he spake, transfigured by the blessed hopes which he inspires, we may be true to our vast powers, obligations and destinies. Let not the gold become dim, and the fine gold be changed by the polluting breath of the world. At the close of every day may we review our thoughts and conduct, and see to it that our spirits contract no stain, that no sensual habits bind them down to the dust, that our deepest wants go not unsatisfied.

If we have done aught this day in accordance with thy righteous will, if we have restrained unlawful desires and resisted temptation, and gained any victory over ourselves, O God, sanctify the good that is in us, and under the influence of thy spirit, descending upon us like the gentle rain, may it be quickened like seed, and spring up and produce heavenly fruit. But if, as our own hearts tell us that we have done, if we have wasted precious moments and uttered idle words, and yielded to a perverse and evil will, exposing ourselves to the condemnation of God and our own consciences, give us to see the evil in all its deformity, to abhor it with our whole souls, and fervently to resolve to forsake it and do so no more. Let us not mock Thee and delude ourselves by confessing our sins with our

lips, while we cleave to them with our hearts. But may we do works meet for repentance, and, recognizing thy sacred image upon our nature, use the utmost diligence to keep ourselves from the degradation of sin. At the close of every future day, whether few or many be granted us on earth, may we have the testimony of God within, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not by worldly wisdom, but by thy grace, we have our conversation in the world.

O Thou to whom the night shineth like the day, Thou art with us always, and that eye which never closes will keep watch over our slumbers. We rest in Thee. We rejoice in the knowledge that thy providence is over all, that the near and the absent are equally the objects of thy care. May those to whom Thou hast bound us by strong ties of affection, but from whom we are now separated, share in this faith. Grant them health and peace. But if, as it may seem good unto Thee, Thou art visiting them with pain and sorrow, if they languish on beds of suffering, denied the blessings of repose, be Thou nigh unto them in the stillness of the night. Let them hear the reviving whispers of thy voice, and submit to thy righteous will with filial

acquiescence. Sanctify to them, and to us all, the discipline of life. By a kindred faith, may we all be prepared for the more perfect communion of that world where separation is unknown.

Our heart's desire and prayer for all our brethren is, that they may have a living faith in God, and acknowledge thine everlasting law, and live in undeviating conformity thereto. Then shall there be a new heavens and a new earth, and thy kingdom shall come, and from all hearts there shall ascend unto Thee ascriptions of blessing and honour, dominion and praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

III.

O Thou Invisible and Almighty, in whose hand is our life, and whose are all our ways, we prostrate our souls before Thee in acknowledgment of our absolute dependence upon Thee. We are weak, ignorant, sinning creatures. Thou art without beginning and without end, infinite in every perfection; and all thy works, from the greatest to the least, from the mighty worlds flaming overhead to the dust under our feet, all are miracles of power and wisdom.

But great as Thou art, raised high above our most exalted conceptions, still thy majesty terrifies us not. Even our sins, though they testify against us, cannot drive us from thy mercy-seat, or make us afraid of Thee. Love, infinite, unchanging love, is revealed in all thy ways. Amidst all the wonders of thy hand, a still small voice from heaven speaketh in our

hearts and addresses us as dear children, and encourages us to draw nigh unto Thee as unto a Father, yea, and more than a Father. Our earthly parents chasten us after their own pleasure, but Thou for our profit. They, like us, are ignorant and weak, but Thou knowest all things. If they are disposed to give good things to their children, how much more art Thou, perfect in holiness, ready to bless thy creatures and visit them with thy favour!

Another day, O God, has borne witness to thy mercy, and now the shades of evening have again descended, but no shadow obscures the light of thy love. We have forgotten Thee, but Thou hast never forgotten us. Even when we have been serving our own selfish passions and our hands have been busy to do our own will, still Thou hast given us health and strength. Still we have lived upon thy bounty, and thy sun hath shone upon our way. What are we, what have we done, that we should be the objects of so much care! We have done nothing, we can do nothing, for Thee. If we be righteous, what do we give Thee, or what dost Thou receive at our hands? But we are not righteous. In many things we have done wickedly, and we have left undone the things Thou hast commanded

us to do. Still thy bounty has been continued in the same inexhaustible abundance; and we can only cry, "O the depths! O the depths of the mercy of God!"

Fill us, we beseech Thee, fill us with thine own blessed spirit, which is love, and then shall we be qualified to live as we ought under the reception of so many favours. May the thought of thy goodness and of our infinite obligations become the deepest, the most active principle of our being. Crush every desire within us inconsistent with the prayer that we now offer. Make it the dearest purpose of our lives to acquaint ourselves with Thee, to know thy will and to do it, no matter what struggles and sacrifices it may cost us.

May we discern a beauty and a glory beyond all that eye hath seen or ear heard, or our hearts have yet conceived, in a steady, increasing, entire obedience to thy will. We cannot doubt, we have a thousand reasons for believing, myriads of voices around and within assure us, that Thou willest only our own everlasting welfare. Our own hearts declare it. Thy beloved Son hath sealed the blessed truth with his precious blood. How entirely then are we left without excuse, how justly do

we stand self-condemned, when we yield to a blind and selfish will, and turn away from Thee, the preserver of our lives, and from the heaven which Thou art inviting us to enter to partake of the blessedness of thine own nature!

Create within us new hearts, hearts bound for ever to thy service. Help us to tear down every idol that we so fondly worship, to be superior to the fear and favour of the world, to cleave at all hazards to the right. Let us never again shrink from speaking the truth, and from doing it, never more study to divide our affections between God and the world. Let this day be the last spent in indolence and levity, in forgetfulness of eternity and of Thee. On the morrow when we rise, may it be with new resolutions, and with our faces set heavenward. O that this present moment might prove the beginning of a new era in the history of our immortal souls; that we might pass from death unto life, that thy word might be heard within us, breaking our spiritual slumbers, raising us up out of the grave of sin and sense, and calling us with resistless power to enter into the enjoyment of that peace which passes all expression!

With the spirit of these petitions in our

hearts, we would now retire to rest. We resign ourselves to thy care, O Thou who never sleepest! Give us undisturbed repose, and let the angels of thy presence encamp around our slumbers. May the devout desires which we have now expressed return with the returning light of day, and find our now wearied frames refreshed by rest and prepared for their abiding dwellingplace. Pardon all our sins and deliver us from their power, and command thy blessing upon us, even life for evermore!

We ask and offer all things, relying upon that unchanging goodness which day unto day declares, and which thy Son, our Saviour, has revealed so gloriously, and ascribing unto Thee everlasting praises. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

IV.

Almighty God! Creator, Preserver, Friend! By thy care we continue unto this time. Thus far thy hand has led us on the journey of life. Another day has been given us with all its opportunities and blessings. We thank Thee that in health and comfort we may now gather around this family altar, and seek the mercy and the aid that we need.

If, in our intercourse this day with one another or with the world, any wicked passion has been excited, pardon us, Gracious God, and let not a trace of malice or ill will linger in our hearts, to render vain and worse than vain the offerings that we bring. Better were it for us to leave our prayers unsaid, and go and be reconciled to our brother, than to deceive ourselves by words in which our hearts have no share. Save us from all such delusions, and fill us with a sense of thy pure pre-

sence, so full and penetrating that it shall exclude every unholy thought, and prepare us to worship Thee, who art a Spirit, in spirit and in truth.

How can we thank Thee, as we ought, for thy daily mercies! Ever since we came into being, with our very first breath, we drank in thy love. And every step that we have taken in life, every morning and every evening, have brought us fresh memorials of thy loving kindness. Again Thou hast gently drawn around us the veil of darkness, and we are invited to repose. Thy gifts, bountiful Father, are more than can be numbered. We cannot recount them. The highest angels in heaven, the most exalted intelligences, cannot show forth all thy love. They bow their heads and veil their faces in unutterable praise. How then shall we, blind and insensible, heedless of thy presence, so often transgressors of thy laws, how shall we attempt the elevated service! Thou, O God, canst read our hearts, and wilt accept their silent emotions. Write laws of gratitude there. Upon those living tables let thy name and thy praise be engraved, and may our whole lives become the monuments of our gratitude as well as of thy goodness. Thou requirest not our words, the mere breath

of our lips; but Thou dost look upon the heart for that acknowledgment of thy bounty which is expressed by the daily observance of thy will. This is the true praise and worship of God, and with this art Thou well pleased. O then may it be our daily, hourly prayer to learn thy will, to glorify Thee in our bodies and our spirits. Thine they are, and Thou gavest them us that we should keep them holy and undefiled, and use them only for Thee.

O Thou, from whom all sanctifying influences do proceed, give us an all-controlling sense of duty. May every coming hour be spent under a conviction of our relation to Thee, as the objects of thy bounty, the recipients of thy spirit, the subjects of thy righteous government. Let the glare of sense and the seducing voices of the world bewilder us no more. Let us no longer spend our strength for that which is not bread, and our labour for that which satisfieth not. Give us to see that the fading pleasures and the corrupting wealth of this outward life are not the things upon which our heaven-born souls are to be wasted, that there are other scenes of existence where we may make never ending progress in knowledge and virtue. Henceforth may we keep ourselves in strict subjection to thy holy law;

and seek first thy kingdom within, and its imperishable pleasures, its unfading crowns, and all needed temporal things will be added unto us.

[Let thy blessing rest, O Thou God of parents and of children, upon every member of this family. Grant us grace to discharge our duties faithfully. Fervently do we pray for the young, that the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, may be upon their hearts, that a commanding principle of religion may grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength. Impress them with the priceless value of youth, the seed-time of their being. Save them from the misery which abused talents and wasted hours will assuredly bring, from a headstrong will and a hardened heart. Let them not rashly rely upon their own strength. May they take heed, when they think they stand, that they do not fall. Evermore be nigh unto them to guide and guard, and do more and better for them than our fondest prayers can ask.]

Fold us, O God, in the arms of thy paternal providence this night. May we sleep in peace and receive strength for another day. Let every coming day be marked by some victory

obtained over the world, by some sin forsaken, by some spiritual grace acquired. And then, when our last day shall come, and we rest in the sleep of death, Thou wilt watch over our slumbering dust; and on the bright and glorious morning of the resurrection we shall arise and be admitted through thy grace into that other world where there is no need of the sun or of the moon, but where Thou, the Lord, art an everlasting light.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only living and true God, be rendered all praise and glory for ever. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

V.

God of the morning and of the evening! Day and night circle ceaselessly round the earth, glorifying Thee; and we, whom Thou hast formed in thy likeness, and to whose weaknesses and wants Thou hast mercifully adjusted the regular succession of light and darkness, would express before Thee the sense of thy goodness and glory, which all around and within is fitted to produce. We thank Thee for the returning hours of rest, for the stillness of night, for the darkness which has fallen around us, the shadow of thy wings, separating us from the world and leaving us alone with Thee.

We do not engage in these offices of praise and prayer with the thought of adding to thy glory. Thou, supremely happy in thyself, art not worshipped as though Thou needest anything, seeing that Thou givest unto all life,

and breath and all things. We cannot give Thee anything which is not already thine. We would come to exalt our thoughts, to cleanse our affections by holding communion with Thee. Penetrate and enlarge our minds with a sense of thy greatness. Bow the heavens and come down and enter into our inmost souls. Let every shadow of evil vanish before the brightness of thy presence!

We would not dissemble our sinfulness before Thee. Vain, utterly vain, would be every pretension against the searching glances of thine all-seeing eye. Thou canst not be deceived. Thou wilt not be mocked. We own, O God, that we have not felt, that we do not feel, the deep and vital sorrow that we ought at our insensibility. The world and its vanities have power to charm us and lead our forgetful feet far away from Thee. Open our eyes, Merciful Father, that we may see the wide difference there is between what we ought to be and what we are. Startle us out of our spiritual slumbers. Let a soul-quickening vision of thy glories rise upon us and deliver us from the darkness of the senses. Let the voice of the Son of God reach our inmost hearts.

And here and now in thy presence, which

we invoke by prayer, may we resolve that, by thy grace, the day that has just closed shall be the last spent in the dark and downward ways of the world. May we see what a vain show, what a shadow, our life is, if not devoted to thy work and will, if it be given up to sinful passions, to the tyranny of worldly habits. May the spirit that is in each one of us rise up, and in the name of the most High God, and in the power of thy might, rebuke and resist every thought that inclines us to violate thy sacred law. May we put on the heaven-tempered armour of Christian faith, and the breastplate of righteousness, and, wielding the sword of the spirit, put to flight all the foes that war against our everlasting peace.

Merciful Father! Thou hast done, Thou art continually doing, every thing for our salvation. What manner of persons ought we then to be in all holy conversation and godliness! How careful to put every moment to the best use, to improve every talent, to restrain our appetites, to regulate our thoughts, to order our speech aright! Our past lives, the past day admonishes us that we can have but little confidence in ourselves. Henceforth let all our strength be in the faith, diligently

cherished, that thou art with us, Thou, our Witness, our ever-present Help, our righteous Judge. Never again may we stifle or disregard those convictions of duty which, our hearts tell us, come from Thee. Let not the unhallowed din of earth ever again drown thy voice. But may we, every one, young and old, be taught of God, being renewed in the whole spirit of our minds, and created anew unto a life of undeviating, ever-increasing holiness.

Watch over us, Heavenly Father, this night, and spare us to behold another day, that we may strive to realize the holy desires which we have now so solemnly uttered. Let us not go hence into the awful and untried scenes of another world, without preparation, without thought, with hearts clinging to this world and all unfitted for a higher life. But give us that knowledge of heaven and heavenly things which cometh only through the doing of thy will. By intimate, personal experience may we know what a blessed thing it is to serve the Lord, our God. If, in thy great mercy, many days are granted us on earth, may they be filled up with righteous deeds, true words and single purposes. But if only another day is to dawn upon us, if but an hour remains to

us on earth, Father of Mercies! let it not hereafter rise up in memorial against us, but may it bear witness to humble and earnest desires after better things, to such resolutions as would, were our lives prolonged, bring forth the immortal fruits of righteousness.

Hear our prayers, O God ever gracious, and pardon our sins, and bless us, even us who have so often offended against Thee, and let us be joined to the glorious assembly of the redeemed, and unto Thee will we give glory and praise now and evermore. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

VI.

We will come and bow down before Thee, O Lord, our Maker. We are the people of thy pasture, the sheep of thy hand. Through the dangers of the day Thou hast been our guardian and our guide. Objects of thy love, monuments of thy mercy, we draw nigh unto Thee. Wilt Thou draw nigh unto us, O Thou, our Preserver and Friend, and open Thou our lips that our hearts may show forth thy praise.

When we raise our thoughts, Great God, to Thee, and consider the relations we sustain to things invisible, we cannot avoid perceiving, with shame and humiliation, how insensible we have been to the awful presence in which we have our being. Immensity and Eternity are around us. An all-seeing eye follows us wherever we go, and not a thought eludes thy notice. Yet have we lived engrossed with the present, and with our own evil devices.

How many vain words have we thoughtlessly uttered! How many precious moments misspent! How poorly have our lives corresponded with our prayers! How little solicitude for the salvation of our souls has the past day evinced! O we are weak, and we should sink down in despair of the great work to which thy voice in our hearts and all the lessons and warnings of thy providence call us, were we not assured that there is an almighty and everlasting Spirit always at hand to inspire the humble and the contrite! Persuaded of thy power and will to aid us, we cast ourselves upon Thee. Deliver us from every inclination that leads us away from our duty and our God. Take us, Heavenly Father, and mould us to thy will. Give us strength to overcome every unholy passion. May we have that faith in Thee, our ever-present Witness, in life as an opportunity of improvement, in the irreversible laws of thy government, which for ever bind together holiness and peace, sin and misery—give us this faith that shall work within us, the very power of God to the deliverance of our souls from all evil.

We pray that we may not pass our lives as if there were nothing better to live for than

the gratifications of sense and the pleasures of time. May we discern the invisible things of the soul, and find our life in fulfilling the purposes of thy perfect wisdom and goodness, in self-command and self-denial, in ceaseless acts of kindness, in referring ourselves, all our thoughts and deeds, to thy holy law. Thou hast shown us what is good, and made us to distinguish right from wrong. Let us not do the one while we approve the other. But may our actions represent our thoughts, and our thoughts be evermore acceptable in thy sight, O Thou, our Strength and our Redeemer.

Be it far from us, O God, to murmur that the great end of our being, even the salvation of our souls, is attainable only by ceaseless watchfulness and unintermitted exertion. Rather may we rejoice with joy unspeakable, that, upon any conditions, so great an end can be reached. Our trials, however numerous and severe, are nought in comparison with the eternal weight of glory revealed to every pure heart. Eye hath not seen, and cannot, what Thou hast prepared out of the unfathomable depths of thy love for those who love Thee. Save us from being disheartened in the path of duty. Breathe into us immortal

hopes, and they shall give us the animation that we need. Lift up the hands that hang down and strengthen the feeble knees. May we do with our might whatsoever our hands find to do, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking always unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. May he be revealed, not to our bodily eyes, but to our hearts. To resemble him, to cherish the same spirit, to be ready, like him, to do and to bear all things for the sake of truth and of God, may this be our constant aim, the prayer for ever rising from our souls. May we lead the lives, which we live in the flesh, according to the faith and example of thy Son.

O God, our Protector and Friend, dwell evermore in this family, and fill this house with thy peace. May it be the abode of pure thoughts and of a spirit of kindness that never grows weary. Give us meekness and forbearance one toward another, and dispose us always to bear one another's burthens. [May the elder members of this household be the guides and examples of those whose years are few, and to whom life is yet an untried scene. Teach us all the worth of our present opportunities, and hand in hand may we cheerfully do and endure thy will. Long continue to us

our domestic prosperity, and let not this circle be invaded by sickness or death. But we bow to Thee, Supreme Disposer of all events.] Whether we are permitted to dwell together in peace for many years, or called to an early separation, may we preserve that unity of spirit which no outward vicissitudes can disturb, which will give us comfort in adversity, and in death the triumphant hope of meeting around thy throne, and of being bound to one another, to the spirits of the just made perfect, to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to Thee, the God of all, by ties of which the ties of kindred are but feeble types. Hear us, O our Father, in heaven thy holy habitation, and when Thou hearest, accept, forgive and bless us; and to Thee shall be ascribed all power and glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

VII.

Thou, O God, art never weary with doing us good. May we never grow weary of approaching thy footstool with the offerings of gratitude and praise. Now that the labours of the day are ended, and Thou art affording us an opportunity of repose, we would commune for a while with our own spirits and with Thee, the Father of our spirits. Quicken our languid powers, and may our holiest affections be gathered around this altar. Let the words of our lips and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Thou to whom every heart is open and bare.

With what gladness should we welcome the hour that calls us to thy mercy-seat, here to cast off the burthen of earthly cares and meditate on Thee. But alas! we know, O Father, and we confess it with sorrow and remorse, that many a time and oft our prayers and

praises have been cold and formal, that we have drawn nigh unto Thee with our lips, when our hearts were—O how far away! We have greatly lacked the singleness and fervour of mind upon which alone we could hope for a blessing. No wonder is it that we have yielded to our besetting sins, that they have triumphed over us again and again. We implore Thee, O God, to send down upon us the reviving spirit of thy grace. Breathe a holy influence, the very life of God, into our souls, that they may live and not die. Save us from spiritual death.

We would, Merciful Father, that the solemn conditions of our being should be ever present to our minds. Thou hast formed us after thine own image. Thou hast made us intelligent and immortal. Thy sacred law Thou hast stamped upon our hearts and set before our eyes. By a patient continuance in well doing we may attain, so great is thy mercy! to glory and honour unspeakable. But tribulation and anguish await every soul of man that doeth evil. Such is thy holy and unchangeable will. Give us then to abhor every form of sin, to struggle against it as for life, and do Thou grant us in the peace of pure and obedient minds to enjoy the assurance of

that loving kindness which is better than life. Make it our ruling aim, our supreme interest, the purpose nearest our hearts, not to accumulate riches, not to gratify our appetites, not to live in sloth and ease, but rather to serve God in our bodies and in our spirits, to deny ourselves, and, if need be, to make every sacrifice of earthly comfort, in order to realize thy will in our hearts and lives. Give us strength to exercise the strictest self-discipline, to restrain and command every irregular thought; and daily and hourly build us up in faith and hope and charity, and make our hearts the chosen temples of thy spirit.

When we pray for the forgiveness of our sins, may it be, O God, with an earnest determination to do all that in us lies to forsake them. Help us to see them as they are, bravely to confront the evil that is in our hearts, to pluck out every darling sin, and keep watch day and night for the salvation of our souls. O that we might see and know what a blessed thing it is in the sight of heaven for thy children to contend bravely against all the powers of darkness, and come off conquerors through thy grace! Give us this joy, the joy of souls redeemed and victorious, every day becoming more and more heavenly minded,

more and more devoted to the pursuit of excellence, more and more like our Saviour and like our God.

We bless the providence upon which we have this day been dependent. How bountifully has every want been supplied! What springs of enjoyment have been opened around us! Again thy sun hath risen and set. Again we have breathed thine air and walked this earth, and the glorious spectacle of thy works has passed before us. How powerful are the ministrations of thy spirit, speaking to us through all that we behold, in the light and in the air, and by all the experience of daily life! Great God, may we never more be so insensible, as we have been, to thy holy discipline! May every future day, every coming hour, have a new and sacred value in our eyes. Into our inmost souls may that voice penetrate which declares that now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

We commend ourselves to thine unalterable love this night. Thy hand hath led us through the day, and Thou wilt watch over us in the hours of darkness. Day and night all creatures wait on Thee. None are forgotten of God. Without thy will not a hair

of our heads shall perish. We pray only for a faith unchanging like thy love. Whether we live or die we are thine, and we are under thy providence evermore. Whither shall we go from thy presence? Whither shall we flee from thy Spirit? If we ascend up into heaven, Thou art there. If we make our bed in the lowest depths, Thou art there. If we take the wings of the morning light and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand shall lead us. If we say surely the darkness shall cover us, the night shall be light about us. Darkness hideth not from Thee. May these thoughts possess our hearts morning, noon and night, and at all times and in all places give us grace, with fervent sincerity to ascribe unto Thee all praise and glory, and rely upon that mercy which endureth for ever and ever. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

VIII.

O Thou who hast commanded men every where to pray unto Thee, in obedience to thy commands, written in our very nature, we would bow our souls before thy throne. Teach us how to pray and what to pray for, and let the words of our lips be sanctified by the spirit of prayer in our hearts, and find acceptance in thy sight. While we muse upon thy mercies, kindle within us the sacrifice of true devotion, and let our thoughts, set free from earth and mounting to Heaven, bring back a heavenly influence to cleanse our bosoms of all sin, to foster every virtuous inclination. May we consider well what it is that we are doing, how sacred are the offices of prayer and praise; and save us from the guilt of mocking Thee with the forms of devotion, without its power.

We know, O God, that we might have

made the day which has just closed one uninterrupted religious service, more acceptable in thy sight than whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. It was our duty to do it, and Thou didst furnish every inducement to aid us. Thine all-sufficient grace has been every hour at hand to help our infirmities. Not a moment have we been left without witness of thy presence and thy will. From the whole course of thy providence, and out of our own hearts, voices of warning and encouragement have come. Unnumbered blessings have appealed to us in behalf of the Giver, and called upon us for a cordial surrender of all our strength to the service of God. But, Merciful Father, we are yet in our sins. At the best we have fallen far short of thy requisitions, and many times we have preferred our own pleasure and ease, or the praise of men, to the performance of thy will. God be merciful unto us, sinners! We should not dare so much as to lift up our eyes unto heaven were we not persuaded that Thou wilt regard us, not according to our deserts, but in the multitude of thy tender mercies. Thanks be unto Thee for this all-comforting persuasion, for the assurance of thine everlasting goodness! We would approach Thee now, not in fear and trembling, but in faith, not in des-

pair, but with the confidence of children. We would throw ourselves into the arms of thy mercy and beseech Thee to blot out all our transgressions, and deliver us for ever from their power, and grant us grace to serve Thee better in time to come.

Enlighten our eyes, that we may never more confound good and evil, and mistake the fashion and show of earth for the everlasting realities of heaven. Whatsoever is truly important, may it occupy the highest place in our regards. Whatever is temporary, let it no more engross our hearts. Teach us to see our highest good in a single heart and a righteous life. Give us so deep a consciousness of our spiritual wants, that we shall have no rest in our minds until we have set ourselves faithfully at work to satisfy them. May we hunger and thirst after righteousness —that bread of heaven—those living waters, of which, when we have once partaken, we shall never hunger and thirst again for those earthly things, which are fair to the eye, but dust and ashes to the taste.

We know, O God, for thou art teaching us by every day's experience, that there is no peace for us but in obedience to thy law. We

have never known happiness but in the doing of thy will. We cannot sin against Thee without suffering and shame. To wander from Thee—to hate that light which cometh down from heaven, is to wrong our own souls, and to love death. Give us not up to this great blindness! Pour the unclouded light of truth into our hearts. Rise, Thou Sun of Righteousness, rise, and send thy blessed beams into their darkest recesses. Rend all the disguises of self-love. Expose to our view all the deceitfulness of our passions, and may we solemnly make up our minds, once for all, that they shall delude us no more; that every deed and every thought shall be sacred to Thee, O God!

We call upon Thee, gracious Father, to bear witness to our good resolutions. We need light, and Thou alone canst give it. We need strength, and to Thee we look, Thou source of all power. Be with us now and for ever, our very present help in every time of trouble. If we will not be led by thy mercies to repentance and newness of life, O make us willing in the day of thy power, and deal with us according to thy wisdom, and let pain and affliction come, if by no other means the

bondage of the world can be broken and we be set free.

Now, O God, that darkness is around us, we would bear in mind the night of death which may come, how soon Thou alone knowest. May the remainder of life, be it long or short, be so spent, that when the evening steals on, and its shadows deepen around us, our minds may be filled with that light which comes from a higher world, and that, in faith and hope triumphant, we may know in whom we have believed. Then, as our eyes close upon earthly things, and the faces of our friends grow dim around our dying beds, then may thy Son, our Saviour, arrayed in that glory which he had with Thee before the world was, be present with words of heavenly consolation, to sustain our trembling spirits, and guide us through the shadow of death into other scenes, where all is boundless day. O with what rapture then shall we call upon our souls, and all that is within us, to glorify Thee, Fountain of good, Giver of immortality! Who shall not love Thee, and delight in thy praise? All nations shall come and worship before Thee, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

IX.

Praise be unto Thee, O God, our Preserver! Thy mercy endureth for ever. Every day makes known thy love. How rich the expressions of thy goodness towards thy dependent children! From the occupations of another day thy hand hath led us back to the peaceful shelter of this dwelling which thy good providence has prepared for us. Make this house the residence of every Christian grace, [of parental fidelity and filial obedience] of all holy and kind affections; and now and always may our prayers go up as from one heart.

We thank Thee, O Father, for the comforts of home, for the sympathies which bind us together, members of this family, and for all the opportunities of kindness and love which our intimate relations afford. We bless Thee for that religion which came down from heaven to sanctify the familiar offices of life, and

to teach us how the domestic circle may become a nursery of heaven. We rejoice, O God, that our lot is cast in a Christian land, where we may enjoy thy daily bounties in security and peace. In thine unsearchable wisdom multitudes of our brethren, created, like us, to enjoy infinitely, are called into existence under the deep shadows of barbarism and bondage. But Thou hast called us to sit in heavenly places, surrounded with heavenly light, and all the opportunities of a divine life, through Jesus Christ.

Almighty God! with the remembrance of thy many mercies, a deep feeling of our own unthankfulness mingles. From us, to whom so much is given, Thou dost justly require much. But what a feeble sense have we shown of our great obligations! Where is that supreme devotion to thy will which the recipients of so many bounties should evince? Where is that irrepressible desire that we ought to cherish, to communicate to others the light and hope and liberty which we ourselves enjoy? Where is that readiness to deny ourselves, to sacrifice our beloved pleasures for the sake of the wretched and needy, which all thy mercy toward us should inspire? When we think of our unprofitableness and our sins,

how often we have proved lovers of our own ease, how little we have thought of Thee and how much of ourselves, how we have offended against thine infinite purity, notwithstanding all that Thou hast done for us, we are ready to cry, 'O that Thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down, that these insensible hearts might flow down at thy presence!' O Lord, hear! O Lord, hearken and do, and defer not! Come nigh unto us in thy power, and create us anew.

Give new life, O God, to our faith, new solemnity to our convictions of duty. May it from this time forward be our strong and ever-increasing desire to establish some correspondence between our attainments and our privileges. As we live in the possession of spiritual aids and hopes, may we walk in the spirit, and dedicate our lives to all good words and works. Our blessings have been purchased for us by the sufferings of the wise and holy, and by the precious blood of thy Son. May we see to it then that we value them aright, and show that we value them by diligently cherishing that spirit which they should inspire, gratefulness toward Thee, and love toward man. Make us henceforth just and generous toward others, even when they are

unjust to us. Dispose us to make every allowance for the injurious, not to magnify, but rather to hide their faults, and encourage them, as far as in us lies, to cease to do evil and learn to do well.

And that we may be qualified to be instruments of thy love, may we govern ourselves, abstain from all inordinate self-indulgence, and keep our hearts pure in the sight of God. In the active scenes of life, may we be ready with heart and hand to aid every good cause —to lift up the fallen, to minister to the wretched, to advance the influence of religion and virtue, so that all may be purified and saved. In our private hours, save us from evil imaginations. May we keep a searching eye upon our thoughts, and protect the fountains of life within from every thing that defiles. What is low in us wilt Thou raise and support. What is gross wilt Thou purify, and bring us to the stature of perfection, after the likeness of thine own holiness.

We desire, O God, after a night of rest, again to awake in this world, and among these scenes so pleasant and dear. But Thou alone knowest how to order all things. Our hope is in Thee. Prepare us for all coming events, for time and for eternity. Let us never lose

faith in God. Make all things minister to our spiritual and everlasting good; and while all change, light mingling with darkness and life with death, may our way be steadily onward to thy right hand, where our joy shall be full. There may we meet at last, and unite with that multitude that no man can number, in ascribing unto thee blessing and praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

X.

O Thou Giver of life and of every blessing, upon the unseen arm of thy power we have leaned all the day, and the season of repose is thy gift. We thank thee for thy daily, hourly mercies. With united hearts we would pour out our praises here around this domestic altar, and in the midst of our choicest blessings.

But, O God, let us not feel that it is enough that we make solemn mention of thy goodness in acts of devotion and prayer. Let us not feel that any thing that we can do is enough — that any services of ours, although they were prolonged for eternity, can repay Thee for thy great favour. The very power of serving Thee is our highest privilege and thy richest gift, and it increases our obligations to Thee beyond all expression. Thou dost not require us, neither would we wish, to be re-

leased from the great debt of gratitude that we owe Thee. Rather would we rejoice, if we are at all sensible of thy goodness, and pray that we may feel it more and more. It is only in the love of Thee, and in entire devotion to thy will, that there is hope for the feeble creature of the dust.

Increase, O God, increase our sense of dependence and obligation. Make us to feel with continually increasing fervour that we are thine, and that every word that we utter, every thought of our hearts, should be sacred to Thee. O may we find our highest happiness in the thought that we are not our own, that we exist for purposes of infinite wisdom. And may this thought inspire us with a fixed and irrevocable determination to lead righteous and godly lives, to seek heavenly things, and make thy will dearer to us, infinitely dearer, than our own. Shall a man rob God? Shall we give to the world and to its lusts that service which is thine alone? Save us, merciful Father, from this great folly and guilt. Save our minds, which Thou hast formed to know and love Thee, save them from all low and sensual devices which work corruption and death, and unfit us for the fellowship of thy Holy Spirit. Save us from

violating the law which Thou hast engraven on our nature, as well as announced by thy inspired servants, and by thy Son from heaven.

We mourn, O God, that the desires which we now express before Thee have not been ever present in our minds this day, that we have been heedless, ungrateful, selfish. Would that we could lay our hands upon our hearts, and feel, in the sight of God and our consciences, that every hour of this day has been spent as we shall wish it had been when we go to appear before Thee! What shall we say unto thee? Wherewith shall we come before the Lord, and bow ourselves before the Most High God? Shall we come before Thee with burnt offerings? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, and with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall we give our first-born for our transgressions, the fruit of our body for the sin of our souls? Thou hast shown us—O how plainly! how we may render ourselves, unworthy as we are, acceptable in thy pure sight. And what dost thou require of us but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.

O let the unutterable worth of justice and mercy and humility be revealed to our hearts, and let us henceforth make it our daily labour

to exemplify these things, so precious in thy sight, in our whole conduct. May it be our ardent prayer and our first impulse, to do the will of our Father in heaven, to tread in the steps of Him who did good continually and in whom was no sin. Impart a divine strength to our best affections. Make us steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Cleanse us from every secret fault. Keep back thy servants also from presumptuous sins. May we be always growing in grace, mindful of the blessed promise, that as we advance the prospect shall become brighter. Thou wilt reveal to us glories of which our hearts cannot yet conceive. Now we know in part, but then shall we have angelic, divine knowledge, and know even as we are known.

O Thou who never slumberest nor sleepest, we repose in thy care. Fit us in thy mercy for that other and better rest, which remaineth for the people of God. The night of death soon cometh. By well-spent lives, may we be prepared to lie down then with a living faith in him, in whom whoso liveth and believeth unto righteousness, shall never taste the bitterness of death. Prepare us for whatever remains to us in life, for all its joys and sor-

rows. May they come like angels of mercy, bringing life and hope from heaven. Prepare us for other scenes of existence, for the mansions of the blest, for a nearer view of thy glory, and for larger measures of thy grace. Grant the same preparation, the same blessings to all who are dear to us, present and absent, and let thy kingdom be established in every family on earth, in every soul of man. And unto Thee, the Source of all life and light and joy, be rendered praise and glory everlasting! *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

XI.

O Thou who fillest the whole creation, the highest heavens, the lowest depths, with thine invisible, life-giving presence, out of these abodes of darkness, from the shades of night, our spirits would rise to Thee, borne up upon the wings of praise and prayer. Release us from the bondage of earth, and assist, by thy powerful grace, our upward flight. Let the world, with all its clouds and shadows, its vanities and sins, vanish away for a little while from before our minds, and do Thou give us that spirit of devotion which opens the gates of heaven, the regions of eternal day, and enables us to see Thee, who art unseen, ceaselessly giving forth life and joy to the uttermost borders of thy works, and receiving the homage of the countless orders of beings who live in thy light, and rejoice in thy bounty.

We would adore that infinite Providence which is extended throughout the whole creation, which feeds the ravens when they cry, and permits not a sparrow to fall to the ground without thy will. From the inexhaustible stores of thy bounty, the wants of all thy creatures are supplied. How gloriously hast thou signified thy love towards us, creating us in the image of thine own eternity, giving us powers whereby we may ascend above all visible and created things up to Thee, the Invisible and the Uncreated, and enter into the counsels of thy wisdom, and participate in a divine joy! Yea, Thou art calling upon us to be followers of God, to be holy as Thou art holy. Well may we put our hands upon our mouths, and our faces in the dust, when we think how often we choose the darkness of our own evil and downward ways, rather than the ineffable light of thy presence.

Almighty God! since Thou hast formed us for thyself, since we have minds to discern and hearts to feel thy greatness, give us the will to love and serve Thee henceforth and for ever. Let us no more hesitate between light and darkness, heaven and earth, but may we live and be ready, if need be, to die for the sake of that inheritance, incorruptible,

unearthly, undefiled, to which, through thine unmerited grace, we are born.

And may we clearly see how it is that the great purposes of our being are to be fulfilled, even by all manner of holy conversation and godliness, by inflexible integrity, by unwearied offices of kindness toward all, especially towards those who need our assistance. Shed down upon the whole course of our lives the healthful spirit of thy grace, and sanctify the whole temper of our minds.

And while we strive to take off our affections from mere worldly things, and fasten them on things above, let us not be insensible to the claims which the world has upon us, to the opportunities of spiritual growth which it so plenteously affords, in the domestic circle, in our daily avocations, and in all our ways. Thou lovest mercy more than sacrifice, and they that bring forth much fruit most truly glorify thee. Send down blessed influences, that we may abound in the fruits of truth, and become trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that Thou mayest be glorified. As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so, O Lord God, do Thou

cause righteousness and peace to spring forth in our hearts. Dwell Thou within us for evermore.

We thank Thee, bountiful Father, for all the blessings that have been showered upon us during the past day, for the health we have enjoyed, for the comfort and plenty which have attended our steps. Bless every coming day, and may every rising sun find us armed for all trials, and resolved, through thy grace, to redeem the time by increasing fidelity to the demands of duty. Gather us this night under the wings of thy protecting love, and when the last night shall come, may we fall asleep in Jesus, and awake in that world where no weakness enters, and where we shall walk for ever in the unclouded light of thy countenance.

We would bear on our hearts before Thee, O Father, all with whom we are connected in life. Spare, long spare to us the friends thou hast given us. Go with them and guard and bless them. Multiply grace, mercy and peace upon them. And when the intercourse of this world, so imperfect, so often interrupted, shall be brought to an end, may we renew the interchanges of affection in the mansions of the just, before thine everlasting throne. Grant

these our prayers for thy great mercy's sake. Give us in hearts right with thee, the assurance that Thou hast heard us. And to Thee, our Benefactor and our God, the Giver of all that we enjoy, the Spring of all our hopes, be rendered praise and glory in heaven and earth, now and evermore! *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

XII.

At the close of the day, we would bow with holy adoration and fear before Thee, O God Almighty, who dost uphold the stupendous frame of things. We acknowledge thy blessed and universal providence. All thy paths drop plenty. Thou satisfiest the desire of every living thing. There is no place where Thou art not, not a spot in thy wide dominions unvisited by thy bounty. What are we that Thou shouldst be mindful of us! We do not deserve the least of thy blessings. Our life, with all that makes it pleasant and happy, is thy free gift, which we have done nothing, and could do nothing, to claim. In vain do we think to describe thy goodness. It is boundless, like thy being. Who by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty, the All-Gracious, to perfection?

We pray, O God, that we may grow for

ever in the knowledge of thy goodness, that when we come before Thee, as we do now, laden with another day's experience of thy care, we may bring new and deeper impressions of thy presence and love. Give us exalting views of thy character, that our devotions may be acceptable, and the whole course of our lives governed by a reference to thy will. Thou hast placed us here in a scene of danger, and we have great interests at stake, a great work to do, even to save our souls, those powers within us which partake of thine own divinity, from the corruption that is in the world, from the degradation of evil courses, from the worldliness that withers all generous affections and deadens the heaven-born life. And what hope is there for us but in Thee, O Thou giver of all grace and power? Let thy glories then be revealed; let a sense of thy love and holiness sink deeply into our minds, and captivate our hearts, so that we shall no more see any beauty in what is opposed to thy perfections, no more be led away by the false shows of the world, no more place our honour or wealth or happiness in the pursuit of things worthless in the eye of truth and of God.

May it become our predominant aim to

wield that power which is shown in the subjugation of a headstrong will and of selfish desires to a righteous law, to those principles of rectitude and personal purity which our own consciences approve, and which thy Son Jesus Christ exemplified so divinely. O that the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him might be laid open to us, that we might love him fervently, sincerely, as an intimate personal friend, and always ask ourselves, in every case of duty, how we shall best imitate him, how act to obtain his approval and thine!

For all the sins we have committed this day in thought, word or deed, for all our omissions of duty, we humble ourselves before Thee, O God, and rely upon Thee who rememberest that we are dust. May we have a pledge and seal of thy forgiveness in our own hearts, in their better resolutions and their more determined conflicts with every evil thought. Let not our repentance and our obedience dwell only on our lips, but may we do as well as say; and while we ask thine aid, exert ourselves faithfully and to the uttermost, ever remembering that the surest token of thy gracious assistance must be found in the dispositions of our own minds, and that

Thou wilt always draw nearest to those who draw nearest to Thee.

The day, O God, is thine, and the night also is thine. In the light and in the darkness no arm but thine can protect us. Upon that arm which is never outstretched but for good, and upon which the universe depends, we lean. Give us faith, all-conquering faith, in God. With the entire confidence of children resting in a father's arms, may we resign ourselves to thy care, not only this night, but at all times, in the darkest ways in which thy providence may lead us. In this faith may we live and die, and in this faith enter at last upon the untried scenes of eternity.

We pray, O our Father, not only for ourselves but for all those whose happiness Thou hast made as dear to us as our own. Prosper them in all their ways, and lead them by pleasant and peaceful paths. In danger guard them, and in affliction comfort. However long and widely we may be separated on earth, may we, day by day, hour by hour, be approaching to that spiritual fellowship which outward changes may promote but cannot interrupt.

O Thou God of the whole earth, may thy kingdom come, that kingdom that cometh not with observation but with power. Prostrate every prejudice, and all the pride that lifts itself up against thy righteous will. Send down wisdom from the holy heavens to hallow the world, to give light and life to every soul of man, and let thy name be known and thy saving grace among all nations, and let all hearts unite in ascribing unto Thee praise and glory everlasting. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

XIII.

The light of day hath gone to awaken and bless other lands, but thy love, O God, abides with us still, and thy tender mercies are over all the earth, and day and night every creature Thou hast made rejoices in thy present care. From this little sphere, in which we dwell, we raise our minds to the great thought of God. Infinite, Omnipresent, without beginning and without end, Thou causest the universe to overflow with thy blessings. Worlds upon worlds circle above, around and beneath us, and up above all the heights, and down into all the depths of being, and far out beyond the farthest borders of creation, the unfathomable streams of thy beneficence extend.

Who, O God, shall worthily declare thy glorious goodness? Although thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand voices were to unite in one hymn of praise, thy glory

would remain unuttered. No words, though from the lips of angels, can speak thy praise. What, then, shall we do, blind, ignorant, sinful creatures of the dust! Known unto Thee, O God, is every thought of our hearts. To thine eye they are naked and bare to the inmost. Help Thou the spirit that struggles within us, and would escape from the bondage of the flesh and the manifold imperfections that hem us round, and rise and sing and glorify thy greatness. Here in the dust and ashes of earth, kindle, we implore Thee, the sacred fire of thine own divinity, and let it shine forth in glory of Thee, the high, holy, everlasting Creator, the Being above all beings, the hidden Fountain of life, the Giver of all gladness and joy!

Praised be thy name! Thou hast shown us how we may glorify Thee. By contrite thoughts, by a godly sorrow for all our offences, by persevering efforts in the way of righteous and holy living, our hearts, weak and dark though they be, shall become the dwelling-place in which Thou wilt most especially delight. Yes, He whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, chooses the lowly mind as the very throne of his power. Give us faith, living, all-victorious faith, in this most

precious of promises, that we may instantly and for ever forsake every thing that shuts the heart against God, and cleave with all our strength unto that which is good; and then shall we possess the power and wisdom and love of the Most High, and the spirit within us will be thy spirit, filling the secret places of our souls with unspeakable peace, with immortal life, transfiguring us from creatures of clay into partakers of God's own nature! Make us to know, as we have never known it yet, that it is for this that we are created—to become like God, to receive the power of God, to be born again, not of the flesh but of the spirit, and to reveal Thee with a brightness before which all visible splendours grow dim.

How simple and how plain the way by which this wondrous change may be produced! We have but to be gentle and lowly, full of words and works of mercy, pure in heart, true in our aims and in our conversation with the world, and these great blessings shall be ours, and we shall be changed.

Merciful Father! we mourn that another day has passed away without the diligence which our great work demands. We mourn that our hearts are still cold and worldly, that

they have caught so little of the celestial fire, that the enjoyment of an hour has sufficed to make us heedless of things eternal. Where shall we find the power that we need but in Thee? Send forth thy word and create us anew. To do good, to follow the bidding of thy sacred voice—may this become the engrossing passion of our souls. O for the zeal of those holy men of old who accounted all things but dross so that they might become like Christ and like God, and were ready to endure the greatest suffering rather than commit the least sin! Strengthen us to tread in their steps, to look upon the life that now is, and to use it, as a sphere for the growth of all that is divine in our souls. Every hour may we be on the watch for opportunities of well-doing, considering no place so mean that it may not be made to shine with the light of a good work, no office so humble that it may not call for the divinest power. Save us from that spiritual indifference which is worse than death, and be Thou ever present to our souls, sanctifying us, guiding us in the way of life eternal.

And now may gentle and refreshing slumbers descend upon us while the shades of night pass over the earth. Let no peril invade our repose. And when the morning light comes

again, come Thou and rise upon us like the sun, and awaken us to praise and joy. And may all the days which we spend on earth be spent as in heaven. So that, when we lie down in death, the same calm confidence in thy care may fill all our souls, and prepare us to rise from the tomb refreshed, rejoicing in immortal life, and to join with the myriads of the redeemed in rendering unto Thee, the Author of our salvation, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, all praise and glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

XIV.

O Thou who hast breathed into us the breath of life, and laid the foundations of the earth, and spread out the heavens above, and formed all things, light and darkness, for our comfort and guidance, another day's experience of thy loving kindness demands our united acknowledgments. We would engage in this service with a fresh sense of the greatness of the privilege. We are of yesterday, and to-morrow we depart, and from the cradle to the grave our steps are few and faltering. We are dependent and unprofitable. What can we know or do? Unutterable is the grace—we may know Thee. To the height of this divine knowledge we may rise. A ray of thine own divinity animates these fabrics of flesh. And while our bodies are confined to the earth with which they must shortly mingle, our spirits ascend to Thee, the Uncreated and Invisible. And, by prayer

and devout meditation and holy endeavours, we may commune with the Everlasting, and this corruption may put on incorruption, and these earthly tabernacles be filled with the glory of heaven. O that the incense of devotion may rise and fill our souls! In the sacred fire of worship may every evil thought and unholy desire vanish utterly away!

Thy kindness is great toward us, O God, and thy mercy knows no rest. The multitude of our wants has not exhausted thy bounty, and cannot. Thy blessing has been upon us this day, and amidst innumerable perils Thou hast been our guardian and our guide. Again the magnificent spectacle of thy works has been thrown open around us. Again thy providence has addressed its invitations and warnings to our hearts. All the day long we have been sheltered under the wings of infinite love, and thy voice hath called us to labour together with Thee and partake of the blessedness of a divine nature. Every hour has been an opportunity of unspeakable good. We lament, O our Father, that our views of life are not in accordance with the truth, that we have spent so much of the past day in forgetfulness of the grandeur and worth of this mysterious existence,

that we have been carried away by our passions, when eternal interests are at hand, and when, if we would, we might hear Thee speaking through all nature, and summoning us to awake and set forth upon an unending career. God of all might! scatter our darkness. Put the power of God and the wisdom of God into our hearts. Let us no longer wilfully cleave to the delusions of our senses, prompting us to seek peace where there is no peace, and to forsake the fountain of living waters. By all that we hold dear, by every hope of heaven, may we be aroused instantly and earnestly to look upon our condition as it is, and to study and obey the unchangeable laws under which we live, and by obeying which we can alone expect thy mercy.

Steadily, one after another, our days are passing by, and no entreaties of ours, no power on earth, can recall or arrest them. What we have done, remains done for ever. What we have omitted to do, we cannot supply. And in the everlasting truth of things, and by the ordination of that wisdom which knows no change nor the shadow of turning, our future condition must grow out of the present and the past, as the fruit springs from the seed. This we believe, O God. Help

Thou our unbelief. Let not these truths be but words upon our lips, dreams in our fancy. Let them not lie dead in our minds. Give them life, divine life, that they may break the inward sleep and awaken the whole force that is in us to unwearied action; that, whatsoever our hands find to do, we may do with all our might, redeeming the time and filling up every moment with acts of enduring usefulness.

We pray, O Thou who hearest prayer, for single minds. When we do good, let it not be with an eye to our own advantage. Let us not flatter ourselves into a false opinion of our own deserts, bearing ourselves not humbly but proudly toward Thee, our God. But if, through thine unmerited favour, we are permitted to make any progress in well-doing, may we consider every attainment only as a new obligation to still greater diligence. Cause us to feel, daily, hourly, that there is a necessity upon us by the irresistible will of God, that we should go on and never pause and never deviate, although the world should rise up against us and the loss of every earthly blessing were certain. Give us power to withstand and deny ourselves, to be strong in the spirit, however weak the flesh. Thou hearest our prayers, and according to their

sincerity wilt Thou answer them. Vain is our hope of a blessing, if our hearts are false to our lips. Pardon and supply our deficiencies. Suggest good thoughts, and give us strength to resist all evil.

O God, our constant Preserver, with Thee ever near to guard and bless, we are safe in darkness as in light. We go to our repose leaning upon that arm which has never been withdrawn from us. May the sense of thy presence give peace to our slumbers, and, if it be thy will to grant us another day on earth, may it be as one of the days of heaven. Evermore bless this family. Keep us henceforth from all evil, especially the evil of sin, and when we go hence, receive us to thyself in eternal glory; and thine shall be the praise and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

XV.

O Thou, whose providence hath attended us all the day, and upon whose protection we rely this night, we desire to become more and more conscious of our relation to Thee, our Maker, our everpresent Witness, our righteous Judge, so that we may have Thee in all our thoughts, and thy love, shed abroad within us, may become a perpetual presence, in which no evil thing can live, and which shall be the life of God in our souls, inspiring all good affections, and communicating a divine power, and that wisdom which cometh from above. To this end we take thy sacred name upon our lips. O for a vision of thy glory to break upon our souls, that thy holy spirit may search and cleanse them, and it may never again be possible for us to forget Thee and neglect our duty, as we have so often done in times past!

We see thy greatness, we cannot fail to see it, in thy works. The shades of night that shut the earth from our view open wide the immensity above and around, and a multitudinous host of worlds silently throng upon our sight. There is no speech, no language, but the great universe declares thy majesty. But barren is our acknowledgment of thy presence there, if we do not confess Thee here in our hearts, and recognise thy living uncreated spirit dwelling within, and prostrate ourselves in profound homage before the throne which Thou hast reared for thyself in our souls. O Thou who art infinite in power, unsearchable in goodness, grant us thy blessed aid. Help, Lord, help our infirmity! Break down the stubbornness of our will, that we may turn with undivided hearts unto Thee, and have, as the strongest principle of our being, the knowledge of God, as the first and best of beings, nearer to us, far nearer, than any other being We are never alone. An all-seeing eye is for ever fixed upon us. One, in comparison with whom, all visible greatness is but as the small dust which gathers on the balance without disturbing the beam, One, uncreated, almighty, who taketh strict account and will render to every man in righteousness, is here around and within us, and from this awful and inti-

mate presence we cannot fly. O let not our hearts be so hard, our minds so dark, our whole lives so false, that this truth of truths shall be to us but as a dim dream! Let it press upon us with an irresistible power, and be our light and law, giving strength to our good resolutions, and enabling us to keep in subjection every evil propensity, every selfish thought. If the slightest disposition to do wrong rise within us, be it instantly overwhelmed and annihilated by the great thought of God! And when we aim to do right, although the world should set itself in array against us, and menace us with obloquy and loss, may we keep on with unfaltering feet, unconquerable in the assurance of thy presence, knowing that the Lord God omnipotent is with us, and that his arm none can resist. May every trial that we are called to bear, every blessing and every loss, contribute to the increase of our faith, to the growth of the inner man in the might which is of God. In all things make us thy children, bearing the likeness of our heavenly Father, thirsting to be perfect as Thou art perfect, and preparing ourselves for an ever closer alliance with God.

We know, merciful God, that in many things

this day we have fallen far short of our duty, that we have consulted our own ease to the neglect of the soul. Make us to see and feel the sinfulness of a selfish life, the guilt which we incur in thy pure sight, when we yield to the lust of the eyes and the pride of the heart, making of none effect all that Thou hast done for us, grieving thy holy spirit, and turning our backs upon heaven and God. O that there were hearts in us to loathe the slightest form or appearance of sin, to give ourselves wholly to thy guidance, wherever it might lead!

Father of all the families of the earth, all are dependent on Thee. Over all Thou watchest day and night. Thou art here, as ready and able to bless and protect as if there were no others dependent on Thee. Grant to each one of us, young and old, a faith which shall never fail, a love which shall never grow cold, a hope which shall cheer us in the hour of darkness and reveal an eternity of bliss beyond the grave. We pray for a night of undisturbed repose, but Thou knowest what is best for us, and the winds are thine angels, and flames of fire thy ministers, and all things do thy will and promote thy glory. Shouldst Thou send peril, let the peace of God fill our hearts and give us firmness and strength to

meet every danger. And at all times, having hearts right with God, may we have grace to see the working of thy power, and commit ourselves to Thee, our faithful Creator, unchangeable in wisdom and love.

Now unto the King eternal, invisible, the only wise and good, be rendered all might, dominion and majesty, world without end. *Amen.*

SUNDAY.

SUNDAY MORNING.

I.

Our Father who art in heaven, again the sun has risen at thy command. Through thine unsleeping providence, refreshed by slumber, we stand upon the threshold of another day, a day of rest, of meditation, of worship and of prayer. May it be sanctified in the outward observance and in spirit and in truth. Let that holy light, of which the sun shining in the firmament is but a dim symbol, dawn upon our souls, dispelling unhallowed thoughts, revealing thy glorious presence, and leading us onward to that better life upon which, through thy grace, we may enter when we will. May this day, by the use which we make of its opportunities, by the answers of peace which it brings to our prayers, by the cleansing influences which it dispenses, prove a day never to be forgotten, a day worth ten thousand spent in the ways of the world.

O God, our Maker, who alone canst give us the light that we need, unseal our spiritual vision. Make us to discern the greatness of the grace which this day commemorates. It speaks of thine abundant mercy, of that best gift of thine, thy holy child Jesus, who appeared among men in the power of thy spirit and in the fulness of thy divinity, and the world saw in him the glory as of an only Son of God. Glad tidings of great joy he brought, tidings of infinite love and immortal hope. Teach us the value of these gracious messages, that we may know how to thank Thee, that our hymns and praises this day may be the prompting and tribute of our hearts. Let our faith be not in word but in power. May the spirit of thy Son be our spirit, the spring of our life, giving us strength to avoid every form of evil, and to cleave amidst all temptations to thy law, even although it should command the cutting off of the right hand or the plucking out of the right eye. And then, when Christ is thus formed within us, enthroned among our affections, then shall we be found meet for thy sanctuary; for who, O Lord, shall stand before Thee but they that have clean hands and pure hearts? Then too shall we know its priceless worth, when we have once tasted, by personal experience, of

the heavenly gift. Then shall we bring no dead offering, but a living sacrifice, and our praises shall rise like incense up to the very throne of God. And Thou, ever more ready to give than we are to ask, wilt delight to pour down upon us more abundant measures of truth and holiness. So, by true spiritual worship, by the private meditations and the public services of this day, we shall go from grace to grace and from strength to strength, until we dwell for ever in thy presence.

Merciful Father, we mourn that these our best desires are so faint, that we are so fondly attached to things that perish, to the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, so seldom and so faintly impressed with the guilt of our ingratitude and disobedience, and that we live so willingly without God and a true hope. Increase our sorrow for our unworthiness, and make it that godly sorrow which will quicken us to instant and thorough amendment. Encompass our minds this day with thoughts of heaven. Give thine angels charge concerning us that our feet may never more stumble, that we may run with patience the race that is set before us, in the straight and narrow way, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, and flinging aside every beset-

ting sin. O come, thou Spirit of truth, come and take up thine abode evermore in our souls. Be the life of our lives, a fountain springing up within us to everlasting life, that we may never thirst again, and that these waste places, our hearts, may become like Eden, like the garden of the Lord.

Almighty God, may thy kingdom be advanced in all hearts this day. May the truth, as it is in Jesus, be everywhere faithfully proclaimed, and received into honest and good minds, where it shall spring up and bring forth the immortal fruits of holy living. Send its blessed consolations into afflicted souls, and let it bind up the broken hearted and give liberty to the captive. May it be like a sword to pierce the hearts of the thoughtless and the rebellious; and let all who profess and call themselves Christians depart from iniquity, and lead godly and peaceable lives, and glorify thy Son and his gospel, and Thee, the God and Father of all; and thine shall be the praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SUNDAY MORNING.

II.

WHAT shall we render unto Thee, O God, for thy countless benefits, for days and weeks crowned with thy favour, for the means of grace and the hope of eternal glory! Thou hast dealt bountifully with us. Another Sabbath brings us tokens of infinite love. May it prove a Sabbath indeed, a day of rest from all harassing cares, a day of faithful self-communion and of fervent prayer. And when the sun sets in the west, may the Sun of righteousness still shine with steady, unclouded, life-giving brightness upon our hearts, and never set. May no earthborn thoughts obstruct its healing beams, but, enlightened by the truth, may we worship Thee this day in the beauty of holiness. Let not the world have power to intrude upon our meditations, and distract our minds and close them against thy gracious influence. Blessed be this day, thrice blessed, in the opportunities it offers, in the good reso-

lutions it witnesses, in the strength it shall give us to meet all the coming duties and trials of life!

Father of all, Thou hast never left the world without witness of thyself. Thou hast always given men rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with joy and gladness. But Thou hast manifested thy providence still more expressively in the provision Thou hast made for our immortal nature. At different times and in various ways Thou didst speak unto the fathers by the prophets, raising up inspired men to turn thy children from their iniquities, to entreat them to forsake every form of sin, and saying unto them by the lips of thy holy servants, 'O do not this abominable thing which I hate.' And in the fulness of time Thou didst send thy Son Jesus Christ into the world, the brightness of thy glory, the very image of thy perfection. Through him Thou didst announce thine infinite good will, and throw wide open the way of life. He has shown us, by his life and his death, where lies our everlasting peace: even in lowliness of mind, in devotion to thy will and the good of all men, in a readiness to sacrifice all things, even life itself, for the sake of truth and right. The path of duty which he dis-

closed, blessed be thy name! is bright with the illumination of his steps. To us of this distant age and country, the precious records of his gospel have been transmitted. We praise Thee for its heavenly light, for its all-sufficient guidance, and its immortal hope.

What manner of love is this that we, heedless and unprofitable as we are, should be called to the rich inheritance of the children of God! O may we live as children of the light and of the day. May the power of thy truth penetrate and purify and mould our whole characters, quickening our sense of right, increasing our desire of goodness, until it becomes our ruling principle of action. Let us not flatter ourselves that we are Christians in thy sight, merely because we conform to the outward services of the Christian faith, but may we consider that they only are true believers who believe with the heart unto righteousness, and whose faith is shown in works of justice and mercy. Whatsoever things are pure, honest and lovely—whatsoever things are true and just, may these things be ours. May we think on them and do them. Let our whole conduct be a religious service, our whole life a sabbath. To this end we invoke thy blessing on this day.

Let us not spend this holy season in stupid indolence, forsaking thy house, or entering it in mere conformity to custom. But may we bear in mind the greatness of the privilege we enjoy in being permitted to worship Thee according to the dictates of our own consciences, with none to molest us or make us afraid, surrounded by kindred and friends, mingling our hearts and voices with theirs. When we enter thy courts, may we leave all vain thoughts behind. May we listen with honest and well-disposed minds, applying the words of truth to our own souls, and feeling our own need, our own wants, deeply. Let thy house be to us an open gate of heaven, where we may catch the light of the unseen world, and hold communion with heavenly things.

We pray for our brethren of every order and denomination. May all enjoy the rest which this day offers. Let it not be abused into an occasion of selfish pleasure and corrupting indulgence, but may men hearken to the strong cries of their immortal souls, to the wants of the mind and heart, and be fed this day with bread from heaven. Be this day blessed to the weary and heavy-laden. Let

the name of Christ be sounded over the whole earth. Let all darkness vanish, and all chains be broken. Let the reign of the prince of peace commence. Drop down, ye heavens, and let the skies pour down righteousness, and let truth and goodness cover the whole earth as the waters cover the sea; and thine, O God, shall be the glory for ever. *Amen.*

SUNDAY MORNING.

III.

O Thou who givest us all things richly to enjoy, under whose protection we have slept in peace, and by whose good providence we behold the light of this day, sacred to the worship of God and the everlasting interests of our souls, we thank Thee, and praise thine abounding grace for ever and ever. We bless Thee for the manifestations of power and goodness that meet us at every step, in the air, in the light, in the earth covered with thy bounties, in the heavens crowded with worlds ceaselessly moving through their appointed paths, and declaring thy greatness. We adore that love which watches over all, from the greatest to the least, and which never forgets the humblest of thy works. We know that Thou wilt hear us now and always, that not a motion of our limbs, not the most fleeting thought of our hearts, can

escape the notice of that eye which marks the falling sparrow.

And we rejoice that we can so freely approach the infinite majesty of heaven, that in this vast creation we are not lonely and forsaken, that One, almighty and ever willing to bless, is here, that we can go nowhere where Thou art not. That we might cherish this confidence, Thou didst send thy holy messenger into this dark and sinful world. On this Christian sabbath we would especially acknowledge our great obligations for that venerable faith which has enlightened the erring race of man, scattering the night of heathenism and its unclean idols, raising temples and altars to the only true God, and revealing that living temple, not made with hands, eternal and in the soul of man. We thank Thee for the precious gifts which this faith has brought, for its cheering views of thy providence, for its infinite consolations under the burthens and sorrows to which we are born, and for its immortal hopes, lifting us above all the clouds that gather round us here, and giving us the assurance of a life to come. We praise Thee for all the influence which the truth taught by Jesus Christ has exerted upon the world, for the holy men

whom it has inspired, for the generous labours to which it has prompted, for the glorious company of its apostles and martyrs.

Help us, God of all grace, on this day set apart for meditation and prayer, to order our hearts aright when we enter thy house. While we acknowledge thy mercy, the grace which Thou hast bestowed upon the world by thy Son, may we remember that the world still needs the saving communications of thy spirit, that Jesus Christ has not yet come in all his power and glory, that ignorance and prejudice and many evil passions are still resisting his progress and refusing him an entrance in the human soul, where he must reign and put all enemies under his feet. For this would we pray, the coming of that invisible kingdom, his kingdom and thine. May every thing we say or do this day tend to hasten its approach. We know, O God, that the cares of life and the love of this world's deceitful pleasures have sprung up and laid waste our hearts, so that they have been barren and unfruitful. O let a voice be heard there as in the wilderness of old, and may we this day set ourselves to prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight. Break down within us every proud thought, and what is

low, raise and support. Open wide our hearts to all holy influences. Open heaven to the eye of our souls, and may our prayers and thy blessings be like angels ascending and descending, and be this day blessed among our days on earth, a season of refreshing to our spirits, a day of the Lord, spent in thine intimate presence, and preparing us for thine everlasting service.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ abound in all places of worship, in all hearts, this day. Touch with sacred fire the lips of those who declare thy truth. Give them single, honest and fearless minds, and accompany their labours with thine all-powerful spirit. Let them not make the commandments of God of no effect by their traditions, but having thy word, may they speak that word faithfully.

It is the desire of our hearts for all mankind, and our prayer in their behalf, that they may be brought to the knowledge and love of the truth, which alone can give peace and strength and freedom. O Thou who art nigh unto every human heart! Author of that light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, we commend to Thee the err-

ing and the sinful. Arrest their downward steps, and lead them back to duty and to God. Be Thou the comforter of the afflicted, and strengthen them to bear thy chastisements, as obedient children. We pray for all who are exposed to temptation, for the young, that thy grace may be their shield and buckler. Inspire them with generous aims; and through faith in God may they be kept from the evil that is among men, and from the treachery of their own hearts.

O Thou Friend and Guardian of all, we know that Thou dost all things well. Through the numberless ways of thy wisdom, by the various discipline of thy faithful providence, Thou dost lead all souls in every age and clime, and not one is forgotten before Thee. We rejoice in thy universal care, in thy perfect love. Thou wilt accept in every nation those that fear Thee and work righteousness. Glory be to Thee in the highest heavens! Let thy praise resound over the whole earth. Thy kingdom is everlasting, and thy mercy endureth from generation to generation. To Thee be ascribed all might, dominion and majesty, ages without end. *Amen.*

SUNDAY EVENING.

I.

Thou, O God, makest darkness, and it is night. But let no night fall upon our spirits. Let there be no darkness here, in our hearts, while we commune with Thee and acknowledge thy protecting care, and commit ourselves to Thee, our faithful Creator. But may we be full of light.

What blessings have strewed our path this day! We have gone out in safety and returned in peace, for Thou hast watched over our steps. No evil has come nigh unto us, nor has any plague entered our dwelling. Once and again we have entered the house of God, and joined our friends and brethren in acts of worship, and hearkened to the instructions of thy word. And now before we go to our rest, we would once more raise our hearts to Thee around this domestic altar.

Blessed art Thou, and worthy of ceaseless adoration, Lord God Almighty. From the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, let thy name be praised. Thy tender mercies are over all thy works, and upon every abode of man, upon every human heart, upon the least and lowest of thy creatures, the full stream of thy goodness is descending without intermission and without end. How richly do we partake of the blessings of thy universal providence! Thou hast nourished and brought us up like dear children. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! O that our hearts may be deeply impressed by all that we have seen and heard this day!

If good thoughts have been suggested, let them not, we pray Thee, disappear like the morning cloud and the early dew, leaving us no better than we were. But do Thou give them power; and in the hour of trial may they recur with a controlling influence to guard us from defeat, to save us from the shame and misery of sin. If our minds have been elevated by the thought of thy goodness, let them not sink down again to grovel in the dust, and to be defiled by base desires. But

may it appear that we are the wiser and the better for this day. Let it not add another to the number of our neglected opportunities. But may we give it to be seen, in our increased fidelity, that this day has been spent as if it were the last day of our lives.

We know, O God, that we have indulged many unworthy thoughts even in thy sanctuary. Vain imaginations have stolen in and polluted the inner temple. Our hearts have not always accompanied our lips. But upon thine infinite mercy we rely. Thou knowest our frame and rememberest that we are dust. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Notwithstanding all our omissions and offences, all our insensibility, still we would fear Thee, O Thou all-seeing and all-righteous! Shed abroad thy fear, and thy love in our hearts. Give us more and more of thy spirit. Make us entirely thine. And be thy will the supreme law of our lives.

May the peace of God, passing all understanding, descend and dwell in every member of this household, young and old. [May we, whom Thou hast placed at its head, never lose sight of our great obligations. May we

teach by our lives as well as by our lips; and give us the satisfaction, which no tongue can express and no wealth can buy, of seeing those who are dear to us, our children and thine, growing up in favour with God and man, rich in mind and heart, using diligently every means of improvement, true disciples of our blessed Lord, living and fruitful branches of the true vine. Hear the prayers which ascend day and night from our hearts in their behalf, and sanctify us in the discharge of every parental duty.] And may we all, living together in unity of spirit, be bound to one another by those ties which are holier than the ties of blood, and which death cannot break. Upon all the inmates of this dwelling command thy perpetual blessing. Whatever our stations, be they high or low, may we perform our duties as in the sight of God, and enjoy the assurance of that favour which is life, and of that loving kindness which is better than life, better than all the riches and honours which life has to give.

To that providence which never slumbers, we commend ourselves this night. Thou wilt guard us while we sleep, and nothing can befall us without thy will. In this faith we commit ourselves to repose. When we awake,

may our thoughts ascend to Thee, and to that mercy which is new upon us every morning and every evening. And when the night of death shall come, may we lie down with the same holy trust; and on the blessed morning of the resurrection, awake to a brighter view of thy glory in another and better world. And to Thee, the God of our lives, the Fountain of all good, we will render everlasting praise. *Amen.*

SUNDAY EVENING.

II.

O Thou, who givest us all things needful for the body and for the soul, the sabbath which has just closed for the rest of the mind, the darkness of night to refresh our weary limbs, we rejoice in thy constant care, in the multitude of thy tender mercies. Upon Thee all eyes wait and all creatures depend. And, although we are as nothing in comparison with the mighty sum of things, Thou hast never passed us by. The power which supports the vast creation ministers momently to our wants.

We appear before Thee this evening laden with thy gifts. We acknowledge thy goodness in our spiritual privileges. What treasures of life and light are hid in Jesus Christ! Blessed has been the influence of his truth, notwithstanding the opposition of the world! Old things have passed away, all things are

becoming new since the sun of righteousness arose with life and healing in its beams. Unto Thee be rendered praise and glory for all the good which the gospel has done, for the victories it has gained over the iniquities of the human heart, for the measure of peace and freedom which it has diffused, for the sabbaths it has instituted, and for all the means of spiritual culture so abundantly supplied. How shall we escape thy righteous judgments if we neglect so great salvation, if we go to thy courts and bring away no blessing, if, while light from heaven is shining all around us, we choose the darkness, and surrender ourselves to that service whose wages is death! Hear us now, Merciful God, while we record solemn vows in our inmost souls. We would forsake every evil way. We would no longer live the slaves of impulse, the creatures of sense. We pray for a holy principle of life, to which every thought of our minds shall be in subjection. Into our heart of hearts let thy truth shine. There may the sanctifying idea of Jesus Christ be set up, diffusing light and purity.

Save us, O God, from false grounds of confidence. Save us from putting our trust in outward observances, as if our praises and prayers had any value except as they come

from our hearts, and give us new strength to work out our salvation daily. While we observe the stated seasons of social worship, let us not leave undone the weightier commands of thy law. All forms are an abomination in thy sight, if they do not reveal and foster the spirit of holiness in our lives. May we esteem every day holy. Let the fire of devotion never go out upon the altar of our hearts. But, instantly serving Thee day and night, may we be prepared for that perpetual communion with God that transcends all outward forms of prayer and praise.

Whatever has been said or thought or done this day, inconsistent with inward truth, we pray Thee, O God, to forgive. If our thoughts have been devout and undefiled, let not the precious seed perish. As the rain cometh down from heaven and watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth abundantly, so may the word be to which we have this day listened. May it accomplish thy pleasure, and prosper in the thing whereto it was sent, even the salvation of our souls.

Whether we shall live to behold another Sabbath, Thou alone knowest. Should the summons come to call us hence, we must

depart, our fondest hopes must be disappointed, and all our mortal ties broken. That we may be prepared for the solemn hour, now on its way and perhaps at the door, may we keep it ever in mind, not to darken the present, but to moderate our love of the things that perish, and to lift us above the world.

We would bear in affectionate remembrance our kindred and friends when we gather round this altar, and pour out, Heavenly Parent, our desires in their behalf. Save them from sorrow and death, but, above all, from the evil of sin. Long continue to us the joys of their affection. With the ties of nature and friendship wilt Thou interweave the imperishable bands of religion and virtue. May our love, one toward another, be founded in truth, and strengthened by those inward graces which alone can insure enduring confidence; so that when this mortal shall put on immortality, and we shall all be changed, we may still recognise in one another the unchanging lineaments of thine image.

We pray for all men, that all injustice and hardness of heart may cease from among them; for the prosperous, that they may

trust not in uncertain treasures, but in the living God; for the afflicted, that they may never forget that they are thy children, and that all things are ordered for the trial of their faith. Break the rod of oppression, and take away all chains, and let all thy children on earth enter into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Send that blessed day, let it come quickly, when the dominion of peace and freedom shall be established in all hearts. Then, from every mountain-top and every valley, there shall ascend unto Thee ascriptions of blessing and honour, of glory and praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SUNDAY EVENING.

III.

Holy Father, not by any strength of our own, but by thy hand have we been upheld this day. Thy power, unseen and feebly acknowledged, if acknowledged at all, has wrought within us and around us to supply our bodily wants, to feed our immortal souls. Thy love has known no rest, no sabbath, but daily, hourly, do we witness and enjoy the ministry of thy spirit. We would not witness and enjoy thy bounty in vain. We would meditate on thy mercies, on the blessings of the past day, the health and strength which have been continued to us, the spiritual privileges in which we have been permitted to share. To Thee, the Author of all our enjoyments, the Fountain of our hopes, we would once more raise our thoughts. Give us the wings of faith and prayer, that we may rise from earth to heaven. They that wait upon Thee, O Lord, shall renew their strength; they shall

mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run all the day in the way of thy commandments and not be weary. Walking always as in thy sight, they shall never faint.

O that the holy influences of the day that has now closed may be and abide with us evermore! Have we received any good this day; have we been made to feel how vain it is and how sinful to give to time and sense our undying affections, to bind our thoughts down in the dust; has a sense of our sins been awakened within us; has our pride been humbled; have our hearts been touched,—Almighty God! do Thou deepen and fix the good impression. After a few short hours of slumber, shouldst Thou see fit to continue us in life, we shall be again surrounded by the temptations of the world. Again pleasure will seek to beguile us, and passion importune us to forget Thee and all the thoughts of this day. O may it then appear that this day has been well-spent, that our religious services have quickened our consciences and we have received a new impulse in the way of life! Give us, we beseech Thee, strength to fulfil our good purposes, to reduce all our passions to subjection, to adjust our conduct in every particular to the requisitions of Rea-

son and Right, to live, in all respects, as becomes the worshippers of the only living and true God, the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. May we be doers of thy word, and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves and mocking Thee with the cry, Lord, Lord, while we transgress thy commandments.

Save us, O God, from forgetting the strict account to which we shall be called for the use we make of these privileges. Even the grace which has been given us, Thou wilt take away, if we join ourselves to idols. Thy judgments will be seen and felt in the growing insensibility of our minds, in the increasing perversion of our will. But to those who, by giving heed to thy truth, acquire strength, more strength shall be given, and Thou wilt enrich them with daily accessions of spiritual power. Blessed, thrice blessed, they who thus obtain thy love! Give us, we pray Thee, the assurance of thy favour in the increased ability of our own hearts, in a greater readiness to sacrifice our private inclinations to the good of others, in a more cordial devotion to duty, in a more fervent love of goodness and of God. But never let us be misled by spiritual pride. Like the holy apostle, may we never count ourselves to have done all, but forget

the things that are behind and press onward for evermore. So that we are able to do thy will, may we deem it blessedness enough, although we should be called to bear manifold afflictions and to part with our dearest earthly blessings. Let us not account even life dear unto us, so that we may finish our course with joy and obtain thy mercy.

Lord God most gracious! Thou art our shepherd. We shall not want. Thou gently leadest us all the day; and at night we rest under the shadow of the Almighty. Should our spirits be borne hence in our sleep, we could not fall from the embrace of thine all-surrounding love. In life, in death and in unknown worlds, we are encompassed by thy presence. Let this thought reign within us, and illuminate the night with a light above the brightness of the sun. Let all fears vanish away before it, and in every hour of peril may it give us strength to do and endure. Let it be a staff to support, and a rod to correct us. May the same all-sustaining faith bless and strengthen and guard all those whom we love, wherever they go, by night and by day. May it dwell in every soul on earth, and be a light to those who walk in darkness, a never-failing spring of consolation to all the sons and

daughters of affliction. O send that glorious day, that eternal sabbath, which shall know no night, when a saving faith in God shall abound in all hearts, and all thy children on earth shall join their voices in ascriptions of blessing and honour, dominion and praise, to Thee and to thy Son for ever and ever! *Amen.*

SOCIAL WORSHIP.

[Two Forms of Prayer for the use of Families and Societies destitute of the stated means of religious improvement.]

I.

PRAYER.

O Thou who art present in all worlds and in all hearts! As disciples of thy Son, in the spirit and faith of his gospel, we seek thy blessing, upon this hallowed morning. Inspire us with the sentiments of devotion that shall sanctify the place and make it the house of God and the gate of heaven. Thou seekest spiritual worshippers, and where such are gathered together, be they many or few, there dost Thou dispense thy richest blessings. O let not our worship be a cold and hollow form, mocking Thee and deceiving our hearts! In godly sincerity may we take thy sacred name upon our lips. Help us to meditate and listen and pray, with lowly and fervent minds, to

confess and forsake our sins, and to dedicate our whole being to Thee. By these religious services, begun, continued and ended in thy fear and love, may we be aided to do thy will in life, and prepared for the solemn hour of death, and for entrance into that world which is eternal, invisible, and full of thy glory. We ask thy blessing, trusting in thy mercy, and ascribing to Thee all might, dominion and praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

READ THE SCRIPTURES. HYMN.

PRAYER.

Great art Thou, O God, and unutterable is thy glory! The universe, with all that it contains, is but as an atom before Thee. The highest intelligences vainly attempt to reach the height and to fathom the depths of thy nature. Now, while we bow ourselves in thy presence, far and wide, through all existence, thine eternal spirit is at work, and through all changes, through the revolutions of worlds and systems of worlds, by light and darkness, by birth and growth and decay, amidst the din of conflicting elements and in the deepest stillness, Thou art fulfilling thy will.

With what joy should our hearts overflow,

when we consider in how many ways Thou art calling us to acquaint ourselves with Thee, to regard Thee as our Friend and Father, without whose will not a hair of our heads shall perish, and whose hand is for ever extended to bless us! We hear the voice of thy love sounding from all thy works. We read the promise of thy care in the adjustment of all things around and above to the growth of our minds and the peace of our hearts. In our own bosoms there is an ever-present and sacred witness of God. A light from Thee, enlightening every man that cometh into the world, showing us the way in which we should go, and warning us to flee from the path of darkness and death, shines there, kindled by no mortal hand, and brighter than the light of all human wisdom. We look back upon the history of the past, and everywhere we behold the proofs of thy parental providence. Thou hast spoken unto the fathers of our race, by the voices of prophets and apostles. In the riches of thy wisdom and love, One hath appeared, rising upon the world like the sun and filling all things with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Believing in him, receiving his words as the words of eternal truth, we come, with the confidence of children, to Thee, the Invisible. Let an

influence from on high sanctify our thoughts, and may the power of the ever-living God work mightily within us to enlarge our understandings and enrich our souls.

We pray, O our Father, that, as we are made to discern thine awful presence, we may have Thee in all our thoughts. Be Thou present to us, not only at these seasons, when with solemn forms we invoke thy blessing, but always, in all our walks public and private. Let it be fixed in our minds, deeply and for ever, that whatever we say and think and do, is said and thought and done in the presence of a being of infinite purity, an all-seeing Witness, an unerring Judge, who will render unto us according to our deeds, tribulation and anguish unto every soul of man that doeth evil, but unto those, who patiently continue in well-doing, eternal life.

By the powers of our own nature, by the revelations of thy Word, by the voice of that religion, in the faith and liberty of which we assemble here this day, we are called to the high offices and the rich inheritance of the children of God. Thou hast not left us in ignorance of our duty and destiny. Let us not then any longer close our hearts to our eternal interests. Let us not waste the morning hour of eternity in a senseless devotion to

present pleasure, the sport and slaves of earth-born passions. But, being the offspring of God, may we act the part of dear children, fleeing as on the wings of the wind to do all the will of our Father in heaven, resisting every thought that would involve us in the guilt of disobedience. May it be our great business, our beloved pleasure, in all circumstances to seek thy glory. O that our souls were so enamoured with the divine hope of spiritual progress, that we might be instantly prompted to regulate our whole conduct, our tempers and our tongues, by the pure precepts of the religion of Jesus and to give living proof of the perfect will of God! Take us under thy holy guidance and give us the grace of unreserved submission. Make us gentle and patient and diligent and heavenly-minded, and clothe us with profound humility.

Father of the spirits of all flesh, upon thy servants here assembled let thy blessing descend and rest. Be the shield of the young and the staff of the aged. Bless our families and friends. We pray for all men; for the needy that they may have that treasure which is beyond all price; for the prosperous, that, as they gain honour among men, they may keep themselves humble before God; for the erring, that they may be reclaimed; for the

slaves of sinful pleasure, that they may be arrested by the voice of Him who came to seek and to save the lost; and for all orders of men, high and low, bond and free, that they may possess a wise and understanding spirit, and live in peace and love.

Accept these our services. Ascending from sincere hearts, may they bring down upon us thy blessing, and may we manifest their fruits in righteous and holy lives. These things we ask as the disciples of thy Son, for whose mission of mercy praised be thy name for ever, and through whom to Thee be rendered praises without end. *Amen.*

HYMN. A DISCOURSE.

PRAYER.

And now may the God of all grace, who hath sent his holy child Jesus to deliver us from the power of darkness and call us to his glory, give power to the word of instruction to which we have now listened. May it bring forth immortal fruit. Grant, Heavenly Father, that we may be wiser and better for this service, more disposed to take serious views of this life, and to direct our aims to a higher state. Increase our faith and hope

and charity, and may our future conduct, impressed by the holy truths with which we here commune, bear witness how good a thing it is to worship the Lord our God. Serving Thee day and night, henceforth and for ever, may we, through thine everlasting mercy, meet at last in that temple not made with hands. And to Thee will we render praise and glory unceasing. *Amen.*

HYMN.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion and fellowship of his holy spirit be with us all for ever.

II.

PRAYER.

Almighty God! we are always in thy presence; and not a thought of our hearts can elude thine eye. For every word that we utter we are accountable to Thee. O that the conviction of thy holy and watchful providence may sink deeply into our souls! We bow ourselves before Thee. We seek thy gracious aid. Dispose us to devout meditation. Teach us to pray. And may the hour devoted to religious worship prove a season of refreshing, bringing strength and hope and peace, arming us for the temptations that beset our path, and fitting us for nobler offices.

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, through him Thou hast dispensed the holiest influences, the richest gifts. As his disciples we seek thy favour, and render unto Thee everlasting praises. *Amen.*

READ THE SCRIPTURES. HYMN.

PRAYER.

Our Father who art in heaven, cause us to know what a blessed thing it is that we are encouraged to address Thee, the Almighty Maker of all, by this tender appellation. No other name so well expresses the relation Thou dost sustain to the weak and erring creatures of the dust. From Thee we came. We have been borne as in the arms of paternal love all our lives long. With what profusion hast Thou showered down upon us thy mercies! How has the whole order of creation been arranged to supply our wants! Thou hast watched over us every night, and Thou dost attend our steps all the day. Never for a single moment hast Thou left us alone. When our feet have strayed from the way of life and of peace, thy voice has been heard in our hearts bidding us beware, calling us back to thyself, and giving us no rest while we erred. Thou hast warned us against every thing hurtful, even as a faithful father admonishes his children. When thy family on earth had proved insensible of thy goodness, and we were all transgressors in thy

pure sight, Thou didst not leave the world in its sins. But Thou didst lay help on one mighty to save; and Jesus Christ came, filled with the spirit, and breathing the love of the everlasting Father; and for our sakes, that our hearts might be touched, that the chains of sin might be broken and the gloom of the grave dissipated, he suffered and died, even by the cruel death of the Cross. In bringing back thy lost children, he despised the agony and the shame, and counted it all joy to suffer in the work of thy glorious mercy.

Let it not be in vain, O our Father, that we meditate upon the abounding tokens of thy grace. As our blessings pass in review before us, give unto them, we beseech Thee, the tongues of angels that they may plead with our forgetful souls, and we may be bowed down with shame at our ingratitude. What have we ever done to show our sense of thy goodness? Alas! we have lived, not unto Thee, who hast made us and so tenderly loved us, but unto ourselves, to the gratification of our own selfish desires. The talents, wherewith we might buy treasures of heavenly wisdom, have been neglected or abused. Notwithstanding the bounty of thy providence, we have failed to cherish a bountiful spirit. We have not felt for our brethren as we ought,

but we have been selfish and indifferent to the wants and weaknesses of others, quick to resent and condemn, hasty in our words and thoughts. We have not cherished that lowliness and generosity of mind which become the dependents upon thy mercy. We have forgotten how purely it is owing to thy free and undeserved favour that we exist; and have seized thy gifts and appropriated them to our own pleasure as if they were our due, and the Giver had no claim upon our gratitude.

God in heaven! we invoke the power of thy blessed spirit. Let light from heaven, the holy light of truth, be poured in one full and steady beam into our inmost minds. Let us not be blind any longer. Help us to see ourselves as we are, in all our ingratitude and sinfulness, and our obligations to God and to his service, in all their sacredness. Do Thou awaken us from the stupor of sense. Deliver us from the slavery of custom. Give power to our will that we may resolve once for all to dedicate our utmost strength to Thee. Seeing how exposed we are to be deluded by self-love, may we keep henceforth a watchful, searching, jealous eye upon our own hearts. Assist us in a rigorous self-discipline, that we may be temperate in our desires, pure in our

thoughts, and wise and prudent in our speech. Make us each one to feel that he is bound upon a high errand, that great is the work given him to do; and may we give ourselves up, body and soul, without reservation, to Thee, and hold ourselves ready to surrender, if need be, our dearest blessings to secure thine approbation. O let the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, without which we are none of his or of thine, let it reign within us, cleansing the inner man, calling into healthy and constant action every generous affection, and qualifying us for every good word and work! May we account the consciousness of being one with him and with Thee an all-sufficient, an abounding reward for any sacrifices to which we may be called.

We look to Thee, O God, for a blessing upon these services. We would know the greatness of thy grace in that we are permitted to worship Thee according to the dictates of our own consciences. May the liberty we enjoy be imparted unto all. O that the power of the oppressor were broken throughout the earth, that the wretched and the ignorant and the enslaved might rejoice in the unclouded beams of truth and righteousness! We bear on our hearts before Thee the children of sorrow and suffering

everywhere. Let ignorance and superstition, and all injustice come to a full and speedy end. May those who possess the power have also the will to break the yoke which crushes thousands of their brethren to the earth. Our blessed Saviour hath said it is more blessed to give than to receive. Make us and all men to know this blessedness. Let it no longer be believed that there is any good save in doing justly, in loving mercy and in walking humbly before Thee. May thy kingdom come and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

HYMN. A DISCOURSE.

PRAYER.

O Thou through whose providence we have enjoyed this season of worship and meditation, let not the good seed be sown in our hearts only to perish or to be carried away by the evil influences of the world, but may it rise and bring forth fruit to thy glory. As we

have ears to hear, may we hearken and do. Teach us to worship Thee every day and hour, to convert our whole life on earth into a religious service, holy and acceptable. Every morning may we rise resolved to live for duty and for God. Every night may we lie down with the testimony of our consciences that the day has been well-spent. And when our days and nights on earth are numbered and finished, may that day dawn on us whose sun shall never set; and through eternity shall ascend unto Thee ascriptions of blessing and praise. *Amen.*

HYMN.

Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion and fellowship of his holy spirit be with us all for ever.

OCCASIONS.

OCCASIONS.

[The Four following Prayers may be used, as occasion requires, in connection with the Morning or Evening Devotions.]

BIRTH.

Giver of life and joy, we pour out our thanks before Thee. We hail the advent of an immortal spirit, wearing thy likeness, sent hither upon an errand of mercy, and to fulfil the sacred purposes of infinite wisdom. Sanctify the joy with which we welcome its coming. We would not receive it as if it came merely to gratify our blind and selfish pride; but, with awe and reverence, we acknowledge its relation to eternity and to Thee, and cherish a sense of the great obligations which this precious trust imposes. From Thee it came. In Thee it lives. Through Thee alone can it triumph and reign. By the various discipline of thy providence it is to be reared up for glory and honour. Thou alone knowest what burthens it will be called to bear. O strengthen

us to whom its helplessness so tenderly appeals. Strengthen us to minister to this heir of salvation! May we sanctify ourselves for this child's sake. As the disciples of him who took little children in his arms and blessed them, we ask thy blessing. All souls are thine. As the soul of the parent, so also the soul of the child is thine, and, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. Be this the deepest conviction of our minds. To Thee may we and our children be bound for ever by love and holy obedience. As this child is born into the world, so may we all be born anew, and enter into that spiritual state where all are as the angels of heaven, doing thy will and glorifying Thee for ever.

FOR A CHILD DANGEROUSLY ILL.

With anxious and sorrowing hearts, we bear before Thee, Father in heaven, this child, smitten by disease. It is thine. From Thee this innocent spirit came and to Thee must it return. But, O God, quench not yet this light of our dwelling. Spare the fond hopes bound up in this precious life, and let the bitter cup of bereavement pass from us. But thy will be done! Let not our natural

affections, which Thou hast done so much to bless, prove stronger than our faith. If Thou art about to summon hence this little one who has come hither, an angel from heaven, we pray that for us it may not have come in vain, that the message of love and faith which it has brought may be inscribed for ever upon our hearts. Like little children, may we be humble and confiding, and rely upon a strength greater than our own. Though we lose our dearest earthly treasures, may we gain the enduring riches of that grace which cleanses the heart and strengthens faith and nourishes those hopes which take hold on heaven.

FOR A FRIEND DANGEROUSLY ILL.

Father of mercies! From Thee alone cometh all hope. To Thee our inmost souls lie open. Thou hearest the prayers that are springing there, beyond all power of utterance, for our suffering friend. Thou knowest how ardently we desire that this sickness may not be unto death, that thy blessing may descend upon the means used for the restoration of thy servant, and give success to the efforts of human skill. O spare *him* that *he* may recover strength. Turn our sorrow into

joy. Give unto us the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Let thy servant live and bless thy name.

But, O God, not our will but thine, thy perfect will, be done! Be this the prayer of our hearts as well as of our lips. Shed abroad within and all around us the peace of entire submission. May we all, and thy suffering servant especially, repose unwavering faith in Thee. Being truly penitent for all *his* offences, may he hear a voice from heaven whispering hope. Give *him* the assurance of thine everlasting mercy. Encompass and sustain *his* spirit in the hour of darkness with thoughts of heaven. Enable us all to rise far above the clouds of this mortal state, to sit in heavenly places with Him who was made perfect through sufferings, and where Thou art revealed working in all things to produce boundless and everlasting good. Let not the monitory voices of life and death fall upon heedless ears. May we gird on the armour of righteousness, and so be prepared to part with the near and the dear, and to follow them at thy bidding, supported by that faith in thy blessed Son which takes the sting from death, and despoils the grave of its victory.

Be with us, Heavenly Father, in all temp-

tations. May every fear be still, every murmur hushed, every heart exalted into holy communion with Thee. And whether our blessings remain or depart, let our faith in God abide, and by all events, whether joyous or sorrowful, may we grow in this saving grace, and to Thee shall be the glory!

RESTORATION TO HEALTH.

Our hearts ascend in thankfulness to the Dispenser of all good. Thou hast redeemed thy servant from the grave. *He* was brought low and Thou didst help *him*. Thou hast lifted a burthen from our hearts. We rejoice that a dear friend has been spared to us. We pray for *him*. May the life which is prolonged through thy blessing be consecrated to Thee. May it be given with redoubled diligence to the work of duty. We pray for ourselves. May we lay up thy warnings in our hearts. In the hour of returning gladness, let us not forget the days of darkness that are gone, and are to come. By listening thoughtfully to the past, may we be prepared for the future. Admonished of the uncertainty of life, may the ardour of our attachments be chastened. Let us not lay up our hearts' treasure on

earth, where decay and death corrupt, but may we rejoice in the imperishable possessions of truth and virtue, and see all things as they are seen by Thee, shunning all evil, cleaving to all good. Do Thou reign supreme over our affections. Be Thou loved with all our strength, and give us the unfailing joy of true minds, filled with thy spirit, and growing in holiness for ever and ever.

DEATH OF A FRIEND.

O Thou who openest thine hand and we are filled with good, Thou art our best friend, and although clouds and darkness are now round about Thee, we doubt not thine infinite good will. Still would we seek support and consolation in Thee alone. Whither shall we turn, what wait we for on earth, where the strongest ties are broken and the firmest props give way beneath us? Our hope is in Thee at all times and under all circumstances, and now especially, when we are so solemnly reminded of the vanity of all other hopes. O Lord hear us, and be very present in our hearts, and fill them with thy consolations.

It has pleased Thee to enter our family-circle by that most mysterious of all human

events, death. One, with whom a little while ago we exchanged sweet counsel, hath vanished, and these familiar places that knew *him* so well will know *him* no more. Our hearts are filled with sorrow; and as the beloved image of our departed friend rises before us, we are ready, in the anguish of bereavement, to exclaim, 'Would to God we had died for thee!' All things around us wear looks of sadness, and life is wrapt in gloom, and we turn unto Thee, O Father, with hearts wounded and desolate. Put underneath us the everlasting arms of thy power, and lift us out of the shadow of this affliction. Lead us from this darkness into the light, full of glory, in which Thou dwellest. Let not this sorrow prove too great for us, blinding our minds and hardening our hearts. But may we receive it as descending from heaven, bringing heavenly gifts. Dispose us to discern the working of thy hand, and while our dearest earthly joys are departing, come Thou, in the fulness of thy love, and abide with us and in us for ever, and may we have abundant cause to say, 'It is good for us that we have been afflicted.'

We are prone to live, forgetful of the grave always open before us. We promise ourselves that to-morrow will be as to-day, and

even more abundant, that the mountain of our prosperity stands strong and cannot be moved. We become insensible to the nearest and most solemn realities, and pursue shadows which fade away in our grasp. Thou knowest how weak we are, how liable to lose sight of those things which concern our everlasting peace. And in mercy dost Thou afflict us. By the removal of the near and the dear we are led to commune with ourselves and with Thee, to see the vanity of life and the momentous interests of eternity. Blessed be God! light hath streamed down upon us from heaven, through the religion of Jesus Christ, and unto us it is given to know the counsels of thy providence, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Merciful Father, let it not be with us as it was with them of old, who had eyes but saw not, ears but heard not, hearts but could not understand. Give us grace to read aright and to treasure up in our minds thy solemn lessons.

We pray that we may clearly see and deeply feel that this present affliction, to be sanctified to our eternal welfare, must be met and endured with profound submission—that we gain nothing by suffering, if by suffering we are not made wiser and better. May we take heed to that divine example which, in

thy great goodness, has been granted us in our Lord and Saviour, the man of sorrows. Help us to learn of him how to obtain strength from the heaviest burthens, and draw the waters of everlasting life from the lowest depths. May we see now how blessed it is to endure with meekness, to cherish an unfaltering faith in God, and to give ourselves up entirely to Thee, saying from our hearts, 'Do with us and with ours as seemeth to thy perfect wisdom best. Thy will be done.'

We thank Thee, O our Father, for the many kind friends, still spared to us, and for the rich consolation of their sympathy. Bless them for all their offices of love; and as one after another goes from our circle to return no more, may we, whose day on earth is prolonged, be knit more and more closely together. May we be more faithful to one another, to ourselves and to Thee. And do Thou form amongst us those ties which death cannot destroy.

We would not mourn, O God, as without hope. All are in thy holy keeping, the living and the dead. The friends whom we love depart, but still thy providence is around them. The dust returns to the earth as it was, but the spirit ascends to God who gave it; and Thou wilt render unto all in justice

and mercy. Let this faith spring up like a fountain to gladden our souls. Let it rise upon us like a light of heaven, and scatter every cloud.

Give us strength to return to the duties of life with increased diligence and with purer aims. So that when we are called to follow our departed friend, we may be found in the way of righteousness and with a hope within that shall triumph over the grave, and lead us into that world where all tears are wiped from all eyes, and we shall be joined to the glorious assembly of the just made perfect, and look back upon the tribulations of this world as the instruments of thy choicest grace; and to Thee shall be ascribed praise and glory everlasting. *Amen.*

DEATH OF A CHILD.

Almighty God, Thou doest thy pleasure among the hosts of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay thine hand or say unto Thee, What doest Thou? We would not stay thine hand, for, blessed be thy name! we know that it is never stretched out but in mercy. We would not question thy ways, for righteous art Thou in all thy ways,

holy in all thy works. O may our confidence in Thee stand every trial! We appear before Thee now with hearts bowed down by sorrow. The child that Thou gavest us, the delight of our eyes, the joy of our hearts, Thou hast taken away, and this infant blossom hath withered at sunrise. O Thou Comforter of the afflicted, be nigh unto us, and let faith and hope, the blessed tokens of thy presence, fill our hearts.

In faith would we follow this departed child in its ascending flight. The tie which bound it to us is broken, but it never can be separated from Thee. We called it ours, but it was thine, and to Thee was it united far more intimately than to us. It was sent hither in accordance with the will of Him who doeth nothing in vain, and by the same wise will it is summoned hence. Help us to recognize it as the sacred property of God, as it were an angel alighting among us for a little while upon a mission of love. May we rejoice, with a joy deep beyond utterance, at the thought of that goodness which lent us this precious treasure to gladden our hearts, although but for a brief space. A messenger from heaven has been here. May the heavenly tidings which it brought be graven on our inmost souls, not to be erased by the grief

of the present hour, but deepened by the tears which we shed. Sanctify the memory of this dear child, and may it prove a fountain of blessed and saving thoughts. May that other world which thy gospel hath unveiled rise before our imagination in new brightness as the home of the beloved. O may we henceforth be more in earnest in the great work of life! May we strive more diligently to prepare ourselves for communion and fellowship with the pure and the blessed in thine everlasting kingdom!

Almighty God, what shadows we are! What is our life! It is a vapour which appeareth for a little while and then vanishes away. We take a few steps in life. We suffer and we enjoy, and then we disappear from the face of the earth for ever. But, blessed be God! we are not wholly dust. There is a spirit within us which can never taste death, and which, by all the changes of life, Thou art calling, as by so many voices from heaven, to glory, honour and immortality. Thou art speaking to us now by this event which hath filled our souls with sadness. Speak on, O Lord, for thy servants hear. Hearkening to the warning voice, let us not indulge in idle sorrow, but may we arise and gird up our loins and resolve to use diligently

every moment of our sojourn on earth, seeing that we know not what an hour may bring forth, and that now is the accepted time, now the gates of salvation stand open before us, and we may enter into life eternal.

O Thou God of parents and of children! since we may be so soon and suddenly separated, quicken us in the discharge of our duties one toward another. When we are called to part, save us then from the anguish of bitter remembrances, from the painful recollection of unkind words and unfeeling neglects. Let the thought of the parting hour rise before us to check every evil disposition, to allay our rising anger, to quench all unhallowed heats. May every day bind us more and more closely together. And when we go, one after another, to the narrow house appointed for all the living, O may immortal hopes sanctify our departure! Thou wilt watch over our slumbering dust, and not one of us shall be forgotten before Thee. Thou wilt welcome us to a higher sphere, where we shall behold the good and just that have gone before us, and our joy shall know no interruption and no end. O fulfil our holy desires! Inspire our hearts! Guard and guide us now and for ever, and to Thee shall be rendered everlasting praises. *Amen.*

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

Glory be to Thee in the highest heavens, O Thou God of our salvation! Thou hast proclaimed peace on earth and infinite good will to men. Unto us has been born a Guide and deliverer. Glad tidings from heaven he brought, and holy is the truth which he uttered, immortal the hope he inspires. We hail the morning which commemorates his birth. And to Thee, his Father and our Father, his God and our God, we would bring our grateful acknowledgements, and offer our prayers, that we may be more deeply impressed than ever with a sense of thine unspeakable grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

We adore thy providence in the advent of this great messenger from heaven. We acknowledge thy hand in the special gifts with which he was endowed, in the extraordinary power which he exercised, in the miracles which Thou didst by him. By signs and wonders he was approved of Thee, as thine

Anointed, the Son of thy love, the chosen Revealer of thy will. In thy spirit, given unto him without measure, the spirit of grace, of truth, and of power, what testimony didst Thou bear to his authority! He came, O God, clothed, not in royal pomp, but in the heavenly ornaments of a lowly and single mind, and in him and by him the spirit of goodness was made manifest, and we behold thy glory.

We praise Thee that Thou hast thus revealed thyself in the flesh, and that the divinity which shines through all things hath appeared, most brightly of all, in a living shape, in One made in all points as we are. Thus art Thou brought near, and we are enabled to see the Invisible, and hold communion with the Uncreated and the Everlasting! For all that thy beloved Son did and suffered, for his words of truth, for his triumph over the powers of darkness, for his serene and unfaltering faith, and his unfailing love, for his glorious death and resurrection, we would, on this day, bring Thee the offerings of gladness and of praise.

O may a sense of thine abounding goodness be inscribed upon our inmost souls, by the influence of thy holy spirit, by the finger of God! May our whole being be moulded by the truth as it was set forth in Jesus, and may

we reflect, in some humble degree, the living glory which shone so steadily in him. Thus shall we best express our gratitude when the truth lives in us as it lived in him. Like him may we conquer the world and acknowledge a higher law than the opinion of men, and yield a ready and implicit obedience to thy word. For truth and rectitude, and not for our own pleasure, may we hold ourselves ever ready to live and to die. Give unto us the spirit of self-sacrifice. May all that earth can bribe us with be as dross in comparison with the consciousness of fidelity to God and to him only. O never leave us to prove false to those momentous interests for which our blessed Saviour gave his body to be broken and his blood to be poured out on the cross!

Cause us, O God, to know the quality, the divineness of perfect truth, truth in word and act. What we speak, may it be the dictate of our hearts. What we do, may it be done in simplicity and godly sincerity, with no sordid self-seeking, with no eye to the praise of man. So shall we become loyal friends of the Lord Jesus, inspired by his spirit, reproducing the truth which was the fountain of his life and power and glory.

When we utter these petitions, well may we put our hands upon our lips and our faces

in the dust, for, alas! it has not always been in our hearts to do thy will. We have not kept steadily before our eyes our great model. But we have lived for the present moment. The vanishing trifles of the world have had power to amuse and engross us, and with light from heaven shining around us, with the glorious gospel in our hands, we have followed our own idle pleasure; and have done those things which we ought not to have done, and neglected those things which Thou dost command us to do. Save us, we beseech Thee, from our own heedlessness. Break our slumbers, and let the light of Christ search our souls and scatter our darkness. And may we know, as we have never known before, what a great thing it is to live, what a solemn work is given us to do, even to be like Christ and like God.

O Thou who art working in and through all things to fulfil the purposes of infinite wisdom, give thy holy word new power among men. Let not the Lord Jesus lie buried and forgotten. Raise him up, the conqueror of the world, and give him an everlasting empire in all hearts, and let every eye see him and every tongue confess him to be Lord to the glory of Thee, the Father. May all nations and kindreds and tongues and languages be

filled with his spirit, the spirit of liberty, and be governed by his law. Let all superstition and injustice and slavery, however sanctioned by custom, disappear before that religion which came down from heaven, bringing gifts unto men. Soften all hearts. Quicken all consciences, that every form of evil may vanish, and that thy grace may abound and thy saving truth reign over all nations; and to Thee shall be rendered everlasting praise. *Amen.*

GOOD FRIDAY MORNING.

O Thou whose presence pervades all space, and whose nature is a mighty deep, wherever we turn, above and below, around and within, we discern the signs of thine eternal power and divinity. But nowhere, among all thy works, is thy glory so brightly revealed as in him who lived and died and rose again from the dead that he might give us the knowledge of God. As his disciples, by the true and living way which Thou hast opened for us, we would now draw nigh to Thee, and, in an especial manner, acknowledge the working of thy spirit in that great event, his death. We would now place ourselves in faith at the foot of his cross. May the blood which was there shed, cleanse us from our sins, and the glory which shines there fall upon our souls, and scatter their darkness, and awaken us to the love and worship of God.

Thy ways, Almighty Father, are not as our ways. Thy wisdom is past finding out. Thou hast not spoken out of the clouds of heaven by the voices of mighty angels. When

Thou didst make known thine eternal counsels, Thou didst not send forth a hand to write them upon the firmament in characters of fire. But in despised Nazareth, among the humble habitations of Galilee, in the man of sorrows, Thou hast proclaimed thy will. Not on an earthly throne, but there, on that foul and dreary Golgotha, where the bitter cross was raised, there didst Thou concentrate the brightness of thy perfections. There may mortal eyes behold the light that will guide and save us everlastingly, a light that cheers the whole creation, and reveals a new heaven and a new earth.

O what a victory was there over the world and all the powers of darkness! The sword and the spear and the sceptre lie broken before the cross, that symbol of love and grace and truth. Through Jesus Christ, and him crucified, Thou hast disclosed the wisdom and power of God to the salvation of the souls of men. Let the whole earth resound thy praise. From every heart let the incense of thanksgiving arise evermore, for the arm of the Almighty has been made bare. Thy holy spirit, breathing from the cross, in the meekness and faith and love of him who died thereon, has come near to the world to inspire it with a new life and with an immortal hope.

And now, O Thou Giver of immortal blessings, give us to know the power of that death which this day commemorates. Let a portion of the spirit, which led our Saviour to the bloody cross, descend upon us, and inflame our hearts with a devoted love of truth and of God. O let us live, not unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us, the just for the unjust, that he might provide for us a way of escape from the power and curse of sin, and open wide the gates to everlasting blessedness. Make us fearless, like him, in the discharge of duty, and may we count it our joy to forego the dearest personal pleasures for the sake of truth and right. While we acknowledge the power of human sympathies, give us strength to rise above them, if need be, and to find strength in the simple assurance of thy favour and the fellowship of thy spirit.

When we pray to become like Jesus, cause us to know what it is that we pray for, how much of love and activity and faith is required to fashion us after his likeness, what efforts are needed every day and hour to obtain a victory like his, a perfect triumph over self and all the terrors and flatteries of men. Sanctify to our success all our meditations upon his death, and let it not be in vain for

us that he was crucified and slain, but may his cross be the sign through which we conquer. We are not our own but his, and to his service are we bound by the tears which he shed, by the precious blood which flowed as of a lamb without spot or blemish. Teach us to consider that when we yield to sinful solicitations and transgress thy laws, we not only wrong our own souls, but make of none effect the sufferings of our blessed Saviour, and crucify him afresh, and account his blood as an unholy thing.

We are encompassed every hour as by an angel-host, warning us to avoid that which is evil, and to consecrate ourselves to heaven and to Thee. Give us honest minds and open hearts, that we may be formed after the likeness of thy Son, and that, being led by the spirit, we also may become sons of God, harmless and undefiled, revealers of thy will, saviours of many souls.

Almighty God, may he come in power and great glory, and be revealed in all hearts. Prostrate the prejudices and passions that obstruct his progress. Let the mountains of human pride be brought low, and make his paths straight. Incline us and all men to receive him as a divine law-giver, as a friend and helper worthy of entire confidence and

implicit obedience. Increase the number of those who are resolutely bent upon treading in his steps, heedless of all danger. May the weakest become strong in his truth, and the powerful learn to sit at his feet, and abjure all selfish regards, and devote their strength to truth and right. As his cross is raised high in honour throughout the world, O let it not be a lifeless symbol! Be it stamped deeply on every heart, and let the whole earth confess the divinity and glory which it represents. Let thy kingdom come and thy name be sacred and thy truth supreme; and thine shall be the praise now and evermore. *Amen.*

EASTER MORNING.

We adore Thee, O God, Maker of heaven and earth. All that we behold, the world in which we dwell and which is full of Thee, the immensity thrown open around us, crowded with wonders, all declare that Thou art, and that no thought can compass thy being. But we approach Thee now as the One Almighty, who didst raise from the dead Jesus of Nazareth, that great Shepherd of the sheep. Through thine invisible power the deep slumber was broken, and the earth has been trodden by the sacred feet of one who came forth unharmed and living from the mysterious place of the departed. By this great miracle of power, blessed be God! we know that the spirit which dwelt in Jesus, and by which he was moved to speak, to do and to endure, was a true spirit, the spirit which cannot die, and must needs triumph, through its eternal divinity, over death and corruption.

We bow our hearts before Thee in thankfulness. Although it was not permitted to

us to witness with our bodily eyes this all-harmonizing, all-revealing, instance of thy power, still, in the rich wisdom of thy providence, Thou hast transmitted to this remote period a Record of this great fact, full of the inspiration of thine own truth. We read and we know that it was so, that the gates of the grave were burst asunder, and the dead was reanimated, and the voice of him who spake as never man spake was again heard by the living, proclaiming peace. Open all eyes to discern the truth of the blessed Scripture! Dispose all hearts to believe, and cause us all to feel, in our inmost souls, the power of that glorious resurrection.

We praise Thee for the light and hope and joy unspeakable flowing from the divine event which this morning commemorates. Bewildering are the appearances of nature, unfathomable the mysteries of thy providence, and numerous and fearful the errors and superstitions to which, in our weakness and self-will, we are exposed. But, blessed be God! from one point a guiding light streams, even from the deserted tomb and the risen form of the Son of man! Thither would we turn for the interpretation of all mysteries. Now we know that the life which was in him was the life and power of God, and by the

path which he trod, we also may pass safely through all perils, and like him be victorious over all outward vicissitudes, even death itself, and make them minister to our growth and glory. Having seen him, we have seen the Father, and we know that Thou art our Father, and we are not the offspring of a relentless fate, but the dear children of eternal love. By this cheering light, all things in heaven and earth are illuminated, and God and man are as one.

For the hope inspired by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as well as for the knowledge which it imparts, we bless Thee. Thou hast surrounded us by all that delights the eye and the ear. But in this garden there stands for ever a sepulchre, and all that we love goes down into it, and every moment bears us nearer to its darkness. But the stone has been rolled away, and he that was dead has come forth, and given us knowledge of the incorruptible and the undying. Although the forms of those we love are laid in the dust, they still live before God. Inscrutable as it is, death is still only a change whereby the soul, that unconquered portion of thy divinity, repairs its powers, and is refreshed for a new condition of being. O may it be our delight frequently to forsake the corrupting ways of

the world, and resort to the empty grave of Jesus and stand there with the weeping Mary, and listen to that voice which declared, 'He is not here. He is risen.' There the veil of death is rent in twain, and with illuminated vision we may gaze beyond. Bright and blessed prospect! There dwell the departed, sanctified, transfigured, victorious over sin, doing thy will evermore, and partaking of the fulness of thy joy!

Heavenly Father, earnestly do we pray that this great hope may fill our hearts and prove our salvation. To be joined in communion with the just made perfect, to fit ourselves for the blessed offices of a better state of being, may this come to be the great end for which we live. Since by thy Son we have been lifted up out of a darkness deeper than that which fills the grave, let us not love death rather than life, but may we seek the things that are on high, looking always to the cross and to the tomb, making Jesus the model to which we conform ourselves in every word and work, living by the life which lived in him.

O Thou, who alone hast mercy and grace for our many and great wants, we cast ourselves upon Thee. Order thy discipline according to what seemeth to Thee good, only let us increase in faith and hope and love;

and while we sojourn on earth, may our conversation be in heaven, with heavenly things. Spread abroad over the whole earth the knowledge of thy Son. Reveal him to all hearts. And for him who died and rose again from the dead that all mankind might live for ever to God and to righteousness, let praises ascend to Thee, his God and ours, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

FOURTH OF JULY MORNING.

O Thou whose throne is in the heavens, and whose kingdom is from everlasting to everlasting, what is man that Thou art mindful of him? Every moment thy grace attends us, and blessings descend upon us without ceasing. Praise, fervent, never ending praise, becomes us. Build thine altars in our hearts, and let the incense of our gratitude ascend for ever and ever.

We rejoice, O God, in a nature made after the similitude of thine invisible glory. We are not confined to things seen and temporal. There is a life within us whose desire is unto Thee. But, alas! how often and how perversely have we striven to quench thy spirit, to put out thy light in our hearts! Only at intervals have we remembered our heavenly birth and our rich inheritance. We should be filled with humiliation when we consider how willing we have been to live for the present only, how seldom we have set our hearts upon things unseen and eternal. O

God, almighty and all-merciful, give us new hearts. Destroy the worldly inclinations of our minds. Teach us to see with pain and remorse how far short we fall of thy glory.

We see thy hand, O God, in the deed which this day commemorates. We hear thy voice in the glad tidings of freedom proclaimed by our fathers. We praise Thee that so large a measure of thy spirit was given to those who laid the foundations of a great empire in this new world. For him especially do we bless Thee whom Thou didst appoint to guide this people through their early struggles, and uphold their faltering feet and sustain their fainting hearts. God be praised for his pure purposes, his steady wisdom, and his ardent love of peace! Great is the treasure we possess in his revered memory. Long may it live in the heart of his nation. Let the spirit of his life inspire us to the latest generation.

Never hast Thou dealt so bountifully with any nation as with this. Thou hast heaped the land with plenty, built up among us free institutions, caused fountains of knowledge to spring forth, and given us the liberty of worshipping Thee according to the dictates of our consciences, with none to molest us or make us afraid.

Almighty Father, what could have been

done more to this, thy vineyard, that Thou hast not done? But what returns have we made, what fruit have we brought forth? Thou hast looked for justice, but behold! oppression—for righteousness, and behold! a cry. In this land, strewed with thy bounties, multitudes of our brethren, children of God, for whom Christ died, are bowed down under the cruel yoke of bondage. And we have forgotten them! Upon their violated rights this people have consented to build their prosperity, and have never cared to undo the heavy burthens and let the oppressed go free and break every yoke. Almighty God, humble us to the dust under a sense of this great wrong. We all know, O God, that it is a sore evil. Cause us to know that sin lieth at the door. Touch our hearts with repentance and pity, and let healing streams of sympathy flow forth to our remotest borders, carrying hope to those who sit in chains and darkness.

We pray for our brethren in bonds. O Thou who, in inscrutable wisdom, dost oft times hide thy counsels from the wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babes, may those who are doomed to drink the bitter cup of slavery remember the meekness and long suffering of Christ. May He who was led as a lamb to the slaughter dwell in their hearts.

Thou who liftest up those who are bowed down, be very nigh unto them, and comfort, inspire and bless them with thy spirit, which is sufficient for all human sorrows.

O God in whose hands are the souls of all flesh, wilt Thou incline those who hold their brethren in bondage, to remember thy commandments, and do justly and love mercy. O may they know what a blessed opportunity of well-doing is afforded them in thy providence. Deliver them from the slavery of selfishness and the blindness of custom. Cause them to reverence thy sacred image in the soul of man, and may they be ready to endure any sacrifice rather than persist in lording it over the heritage of God. Fill the hearts of all thy people with a sincere and consistent love of liberty. Write thy law upon all souls, the law which commands us to do unto others as we would they should do unto us. With one heart and hand may we toil to pluck out from among us this root of bitterness whence spring jealousies and contentions turning our glory into shame.

Shed abroad thy spirit, O Lord, for where thy spirit is, there is liberty. Let not wealth and honour and pleasure be the idols of this nation, but may we be that happy people whose God is the God and Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ. Then shall our light break forth as the morning, and our darkness be as the noon-day. And upon every return of this day, this people shall be found advancing in the arts and in the love of peace, and every voice shall be lifted up in thanksgiving, and all chains shall fall from the limbs and the souls of men, and, by thy light kindled here, all nations shall come and worship before Thee. Thine, O Lord, is the might and the majesty and the dominion for ever and ever! *Amen.*

NEW YEAR'S MORNING.

On the morning of another year we bow ourselves before Thee, O Thou God of our lives, and seek thy blessing. In thy presence, which we now solemnly invoke, we consecrate ourselves renewedly to thy service. May the coming year prove a new year indeed, bringing new thoughts and better resolutions than we have ever yet formed. Happy, thrice happy, will it be for us if it lead us into a new and divine life! Should it bring us trials and sorrows, and take from us health and friends, still happy will it be, if, through thy grace, we are enabled to use it well. Although it should strip us of our dearest earthly possessions, it will make us rich indeed if it give us wisdom and strength, and its memory will be precious for ever. O, then, with one mind and heart, we would pause on this occasion, and pray for light, and beseech Thee to give us new convictions of the priceless worth of a godly and righteous life! Send down thy spirit from the holy hea-

vens to write upon our hearts, to record thy will upon those living tables, in eternal characters.

We would no longer be in bondage to the world and its foolish and hurtful lusts. But we would have faith in God and in the unutterable worth of our immortal souls. We would renounce the pleasures of sin and sense, and no more be led astray by the hollow promises and gaudy show of life. We know—in how many ways hast Thou taught us!—we know that true peace can be found only in making thy will our supreme law, in submitting every desire to Thee. But, O God, plain as the way of life is, we are prone to forsake it and follow false guides and take counsel of our own blinded minds, our own sinful thoughts. Vanity and passion, the desire of the eyes and the pride of life, all these ensnare us and mislead our understandings, and cause us to neglect the things which it most solemnly concerns us to know and do. We do not *live* but dream, walking in a vain show, ruled by the fear or the favour of the world, and we know not what a blessed thing it is, how divine the joy, to be one with Thee, faithful servants of the living God, devoted friends and brethren of thy Son, Jesus Christ. Merciful Father, help Thou our insensibility

and unbelief. And now, as another year opens upon us, renew us in the whole temper of our minds. Regenerate our affections. Give us strength here and now to break away from every evil habit, and to set out with another spirit, to become new creatures, dead to the terrors and solicitations of the world, alive to God and to truth.

We may not live to see the beginning of another year. Long before the present year closes, we may be laid in the grave. O thou Disposer of life and of death, may we be found doing thy work, with our faces set heavenward, and our whole souls bent upon living wisely and well. Let not this year be marked by broken vows, by a sinful surrender of our souls to the tyranny of wicked passions, by indolence and deadness of heart. But may it be for ever memorable as a year rich in generous purposes and Christian deeds. And when we are called to stand at thy bar, may this year bear witness to virtuous resolutions carefully kept, to our growth in knowledge, in piety and in love. And may every coming year, every coming day, bear the same blessed testimony. By the divine power of a true spirit, may we convert all the changes of life, abundance and want, sickness and health, into opportunities of grace, and so

may we be raised above the power of time, and breathe the air of an eternal world, even while we sojourn in this vale of shadows.

Almighty God, we would lay open our hearts before Thee. Search Thou us, and show us ourselves, all the heights and depths of our own nature, the glory for which we are made, the perils to which we are exposed, and with lowly and earnest minds, with godly fear, may we toil day and night to obtain the end of our being, even the salvation of our souls. Let thy mighty power, which controls the courses of the universe, upholding worlds and systems of worlds, O let it descend and inspire us, that, like the stars of the firmament, we may show forth the glory of God. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thee shall be rendered praises everlasting! *Amen.*

LAST NIGHT OF THE YEAR.

O Thou in whose sight a thousand years are but as a day, all things on earth are passing away, but Thou remainest one and the same, and to thy years there is no end. Thy providence has brought us to the close of another year, and we would raise our thoughts above the flight of time to the eternity in which Thou dwellest, and to those things which know no change but from glory to glory.

The departing year in its course has carried hence the hopes and treasures of many hearts. Friends, with whom, at its beginning, we exchanged affectionate greetings, have disappeared, and their coming steps we shall hear no more. Many who welcomed the closing year with hopes as confident as ours, have entered the silent mansions of the dead, never to return. Merciful God! open our hearts to hear the awful voice of the departing year. Thou alone knowest how near the last hour is that we spend beneath the sun.

Soon the day shall come whose evening light our eyes shall never see. Bring home to us a sense of our mortality. And teach us so to number our days that we may apply our hearts, with all diligence, to the search after wisdom. Make the point of time at which we now stand a gate of heaven. Bless to our sanctification the solemn lessons of the past.

Well may we rejoice, O God, that we still live in the possession of this hour of prayer—this means of grace. For, alas! our consciences tell us, that the closing year bears hence but a scanty record of our spiritual growth, that it testifies to many broken vows, to resolutions fervently formed one moment and disregarded the next. Another leaf in the book of time is about to be turned down, and what is written there we cannot erase, and we mourn, merciful Father, that it has so much to fill us with shame. Where is that zeal in the performance of duty, in the work of self-regulation, which we so ardently promised, and for which we have again and again so earnestly prayed! We cannot but be humbled under a sense of our manifold deficiencies, our repeated transgressions, our wilful devotion to the idols which our own passions have set up. Dispose us to thorough self-communion. May we probe our own hearts

faithfully, and tear off all their disguises, and confess all our sins with an overcoming desire to forsake them for ever. Make us to know that life is too solemn to be wasted in vain wishes and regrets. Save us from supposing that tears alone will wash away the guilt of sin. Let us not flatter ourselves with a barren sensibility. But may we consider well that no repentance is acceptable in thy sight which does not reform the whole life.

Inspire our hearts, O God, with the life of faith, that we may obtain a lasting dominion over the evil that is in the world and in ourselves. Daily, hourly, may we watch and pray lest we fall into temptation. Help us to form that habit of mind which reads in all the changes of life lessons of holy wisdom. The past and the future admonish us of the infinite value of the present. May every moment be used as in the sight of God, and as fraught with momentous consequences, with our weal or our woe. O that it may be given us, in thy grace, to walk henceforth as becometh our great vocation, as the children of God and the friends of Jesus! So, when the hour of our departure comes, it shall find us ready, enriched with treasures of which death cannot rob us, filled with thy spirit.

For thy favour to this household we render

Thee our united thanks, for the health and prosperity we have enjoyed, and for the trials we have been called to bear. Prepare us for the hour of separation, and for reunion in the abodes of the blest. Chasten the fond hopes of the young. Save them from that love of pleasure which would render them heedless of the safe and peaceful paths of innocency. May they seek for good in doing good and being good. Do Thou make the sacred sense of rectitude supreme in their hearts. Guide us all through the coming perils of life. To Thee may we always turn with our whole souls in every time of trouble as to our best Friend, and unto Thee shall be the glory for ever. *Amen.*

HYMNS.

HYMNS.

"As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."

HERE in a world of doubt,
A sorrowful abode,
O how my heart and flesh cry out
For Thee, the living God!

As for the water-brooks
The hart expiring pants,
So for my God my spirit looks,
Yea, for his presence faints.

I know thy joys, O Earth,
The sweetness of thy cup;
Oft have I mingled in thy mirth,
And trusted in thy hope.

But ah! how woes and fears
Those hollow joys succeed!
That cup of mirth is mixed with tears,
That hope is but a reed.

What have I then below,
Or what but Thee on high?
Thee, Thee, O Father, would I know,
And in Thee live and die!

MORNING.

In the morning I will raise
To my God the voice of praise,
With His kind protection blest,
Sweet and deep has been my rest.

In the morning I will pray
For His blessing on the day;
What this day shall be my lot,
Light or darkness, know I not.

Should it be with clouds o'ercast,
Clouds of sorrow, gathering fast,
Thou, who givest light divine,
Shine within me, Lord, oh shine!

Show me, if I tempted be,
How to find all strength in Thee,
And a perfect triumph win
Over every bosom sin.

Keep my feet from secret snares,
Keep my eyes, O God, from tears,
Every step thy grace attend,
And my soul from death defend!

Then, when fall the shades of night,
All within shall still be light,
Thou wilt peace around diffuse,
Gently as the evening dews.

EVENING.

Slowly by Thy hand unfurled,
Down around the weary world
Falls the darkness. O how still
Is the working of Thy will!

Mighty Maker! Here am I,
Work in me as silently,
Veil the day's distracting sights,
Show me Heaven's eternal lights.

From the darkened sky come forth
Countless stars. A wondrous birth!
So may gleams of glory dart
From this dim abyss, my heart.

Living worlds to view be brought
In the boundless realms of thought;
High and infinite desires,
Flaming like those upper fires.

Holy Truth, Eternal Right,
Let them break upon my sight;
Let them shine, serene and still,
And with light my being fill.

Thou, who dwellest there, I know,
Dwellest here within me too,
May the perfect peace of God,
Here, as there, be shed abroad.

Let my soul attuned be
To the heavenly harmony,
Which, beyond the power of sound,
Fills the Universe around.

PENITENTIAL.

Richly, O richly, have I been
Blest, Gracious Lord, by Thee,
And morning, noon and night Thou hast
Preserved me tenderly.

Why shouldst Thou thus take care of me,
A weak and sinful man,
Who have refused to render Thee
The little that I can?

The love, which Thou alone can'st claim,
To idols I have given;
And I have bound to earth the hopes,
That know no home but Heaven.

Unworthy to be called thy son,
I come with shame to Thee,
Father! O more than Father Thou
Hast always been to me!

For ever blessed be thy name
For all that Thou hast done!
That thou wilt pardon me, I know
Through Jesus Christ thy Son.

Help me to break the heavy chains
  The world has round me thrown,
And know the glorious liberty
  Of an obedient son.

That I may henceforth heed whate'er
  Thy voice within me saith,
Fix deeply in my heart of hearts
  A principle of faith.

Faith, that, like armour on my soul,
  Shall keep all evil out,
More mighty than an angel host,
  Encamped round about.

THE SOUL.

What is this that stirs within,
Loving goodness, hating sin,
Always craving to be blest,
Finding here below no rest?

Nought that charms the ear or eye
Can its hunger satisfy,
Active, restless, it would pierce
Through the outward universe.

What is it? and whither? whence?
This unsleeping, secret sense,
Longing for its rest and food
In some hidden untried good?

'T is the soul! Mysterious Name!
Him it seeks from whom it came;
It would, Mighty God, like Thee,
Holy, holy, holy, be!

"She is not dead, but sleepeth."

That one so rich in promise,
  So lovely and so pure,
Should thus be taken from us,
  O how shall we endure!

She is not dead, but sleepeth.
  Why in your hearts this strife?
He, who hath kept, still keepeth
  The never-dying life.

And though that form must moulder
  And mix again with earth,
In faith ye may behold her
  In glory going forth.

For what to us seems dying
  Is but a second birth,
A spirit upward flying
  From the broken shell of earth.

We are the dead, the buried,
  We, who do yet survive,
In sin and sense interred—
  The dead! They are alive.

Freed from this earthly prison,
  They seek another sphere.
They are not dead, but risen!
  And God is with them there.

THE END.

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